

DINNERS

IN MINIATURE.



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# DINNERS IN MINIATURE

BY  
ETHEL EARL

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## PREFACE.

THE number of admirable cookery books already in use renders it advisable to say that this little book does not attempt to usurp their place, but to supplement them. It is the hope that so considered it may supply a want which has prompted its re-appearance in this form.

The handful of recipes at the end, gathered from the Cookery Correspondence of *The Queen*, may seem to have been selected with small care as to their sequence or arrangement. As, however, they were such as were inquired for by readers of this series of papers, the apparent demand for them must be the excuse for their insertion here.

E. EARL.

*Tonbridge,*

*October, 1891.*



# CONTENTS.

|                                           | PAGE |
|-------------------------------------------|------|
| I. INTRODUCTION ... ..                    | 1    |
| II. BILLS OF FARE ... ..                  | 6    |
| III. TABLE GARNITURE ... ..               | 11   |
| IV. TABLE DECORATION ... ..               | 17   |
| V. HORS D'ŒUVRES ... ..                   | 23   |
| VI. SOUPS ... ..                          | 28   |
| VII. FISH AND FISH SAUCES ... ..          | 35   |
| VIII. DRESSED FISH ... ..                 | 40   |
| IX. SIMPLE ENTRÉES (I.) ... ..            | 46   |
| X. SIMPLE ENTRÉES (II.) ... ..            | 51   |
| XI. REMOVES ... ..                        | 57   |
| XII. SALADS AND MAYONNAISES (I.) ... ..   | 63   |
| XIII. SALADS AND MAYONNAISES (II.) ... .. | 67   |
| XIV. DRESSED VEGETABLES ... ..            | 72   |
| XV. CURRIES ... ..                        | 77   |
| XVI. SWEETS ... ..                        | 82   |
| XVII. SAVOURIES ... ..                    | 88   |
| XVIII. DRINKS AND DESSERT ... ..          | 94   |
| XIX. BATTERIE DE CUISINE ... ..           | 99   |
| XX. MISCELLANEOUS RECIPES ... ..          | 107  |



# DINNERS IN MINIATURE.

## I.

### INTRODUCTION.

IT has often struck me in reading household manuals and cookery books, how seldom the needs of small households of dainty ways are considered therein. If you turn to the menus provided at the end of a high-class cookery book, you find they are all for dinners of twelve or fourteen people ; while the volumes which profess to deal with the needs of small establishments are, on the other hand, too rough and ready in their directions. The young wife, who starts her house-keeping with the resolve to have the late dinner so arranged, both as to plenishing and viands, that her husband can safely bring home a friend to dinner, and that in any case their *tête-à-tête* meal shall be so well cooked, well served, and bright in its surroundings that he shall look forward to it as a delightful end to a long day's work, finds herself often in need of outside direction, without knowing where to look for it, and so she drifts into extravagance or negligence, or has to work her way to perfection, through many failures, buying experience at a very dear rate.

So it has seemed to me that I might gather together

a few of the results of my own efforts, in the hope they may prove practical and useful to young housekeepers whose incomes are somewhere between £400 and £1000 a year, and who "like things nice." The great majority of young husbands and wives starting life together under these circumstances have been younger members of larger and more wealthy households, the fashions whereof still in many respects remain theirs, albeit their means are more limited. There is no reason that their daily life should not be as graceful and pleasant in its orderings and appointments as it was under their parents' roofs; but, in order that it may remain so, it is certain the mistress of the house will have to see after many things herself, if she wishes her home to be pretty, dainty, and well ordered.

In the class of households I am considering, a cook and a house-parlourmaid may be regarded as the available staff of servants, with perhaps a girl for rough work. All my hints are regulated with regard to the powers of two handmaidens, and also with due consideration of the fact that it is nowadays such a piece of exceptional good fortune to find a really good cook, trustworthy and experienced, at moderate wages, that I dare not include it in my reckoning.

You will find it, as a rule, easier to train a cook than to find one ready made, even though the former be no light task. You may not know much about cooking yourself, but engage a bright, willing girl, who has been kitchen-maid in some good house, if you can, and you will find your knowledge of how things ought to look and taste in the dining-room a very useful addendum and check to her knowledge of how they are done in the kitchen. A comparison of her method of preparing a dish and your opinion of the result, when submitted to the verdict of a good cookery book,

is often of great advantage, even when you are practically ignorant of the process yourself. Any educated woman of quick perception can, I believe, teach herself plain cookery in a month ; for she sees the reason and method of a recipe in a minute, whereas a cook is very apt to have simply learnt it by practice, and so to have no ideas how to apply the same rules to a new dish. It is this, the want of thought and invention in cooking, which makes English food "so dull," as a witty foreigner remarked to me a little while ago ; and if a lady studies cooking she is sure to evince more intelligence and originality than will her uneducated handmaid. But she must not despise the beginnings, and every woman who really wants to know how things should be done must study such small details as the chopping of herbs, the breaking and beating of eggs, the proper bread-crumbling of fish or cutlets, the drying of salads, and a thousand other such details, ere she is on her guard against the innumerable carelessnesses and ignorances of the good plain cook, and is able to tell how and wherefore a dish turns out a failure.

Still, the effort is worth making ; and if two willing and trustworthy servants are engaged, even if they be somewhat inexperienced in the finer minutiae of house-keeping, they will be more amenable to training and correction than the "thoroughly experienced cook and house-parlourmaid," whom kind friends and relations are fond of recommending to young wives. My own experience is that, if mistress and maid buy their knowledge together, it works better in the end, and is more likely to promote fellowship between them, than is the having servants who can dictate to the young matron as to the ways they have always been accustomed to. If the mistress knows how the table should be laid and how the dishes should look as well as taste, and the

maids are anxious to carry out her wishes, knowledge of the means to this ideal end will soon spring up and flourish under their joint fostering.

My chief aim in these papers is so to deal with the daily *tête-à-tête* dinner that an unexpected guest will make little or no difference in expense or trouble, and that, with a very slight expenditure of both, it may be expanded into a miniature dinner-party of four or six people—the modest form of banquet which is so peculiarly suited to the possibilities of a household limited alike in numbers, means, and resources. Every day the complaint grows louder of the increasing difficulty with modern servants of asking friends to dine, without an amount of ceremony and trouble which makes the game scarcely worth the candle. But much of the real difficulty of the problem lies in the daily ordering of life, and the foolish desire to imitate other people blindly. The real meaning of hospitality is to admit your friends into your life—not to offer them as close an imitation of their own as is possible.

From time immemorial satirists and social writers have made merry at the expense of the Amphytrion of limited means, whose attempts to vie with his richer neighbours in his entertainments provokes the scorn of his guests rather than their gratitude; and Thackeray and Trollope, in the descriptions of the pretentious dinner enriched by the dish of cold balls and the coloured shape from the pastrycook's, do but echo Horace's advice to Phidyle, not to offer too costly a sacrifice to her household gods. When an entertainment demands resources beyond the ordinary means of the household, its charm and grace are destroyed at once. The hermit might offer Angelina the herbs and fruit from his scrip and water from the well without loss of dignity; but the charm of the idyl would have been

disturbed had he deemed it necessary to rush off to the nearest hostel to borrow a plated dish and goblet wherein to serve them.

The increasing luxury of the day renders the dinner-giving of people of moderate means more and more restricted, while young housekeepers shrink from the expense, waste, and confusion they have grown to consider the concomitants of a dinner-party. Yet, as I have said, little dinners are, above all, the hospitalities which it is easiest and pleasantest for young married people to offer their friends; and so they would find it, were they content to ask two or three guests at a time, instead of a dozen. The general feeling is that it is less trouble to imitate Caligula in his wish, and to kill off twelve of one's acquaintance at the same time. But really the strain on a small household of a dinner of fourteen people is more severe than that of three dinners of six, and the latter feasts are the more likely to be satisfactory in every way. Why should not more married couples of moderate means and socially inclined devote their energies to the revival among us of the "little dinner," as distinct from the dinner-party, and so increase our social brightness as a nation, and help in the recovery of the lost art of dinner-table talk?

## II.

## BILLS OF FARE.

A VERY important point to remember in dinners, as in other matters, is the value and charm of individuality; and therefore I would earnestly pray my readers to take my suggestions as hints only, to be followed out and developed according to their different needs and tastes. In table decoration alone, variety and individuality are half the battle, and every one knows the charm of a fresh and original plenishing. However pretty a fashion may be, the constant repetition thereof vulgarizes it, till we cease to care for it.

It is the same with the bill of fare. Even with people who entertain largely, it is astonishing how little the relation of dishes to one another is studied, as also what a sameness is to be found in menus. The follow-my-leader principle prevails too much in this matter, and an amusing instance thereof was the whim of preserved cherries which attacked our kitchens some three or four years back. In season and out of season, those agreeable sweetmeats haunted our dinner-tables; they enriched our clear soup, they garnished our pigeons or chickens; nay, they even lay at ambush in salad or aspic; till at last there was a tacit revolt, and the dried cherries disappeared, or, at all events, were relegated to their rightful place among the sweets. As

to the sequence of dishes, I would that more hostesses understood, with Milton's Eve, the value of "taste after taste upheld with kindest change;" for then we should not find, as often as we do now, white soup, white fish, white entrée, &c., follow one another, till the palate is cloyed with the continued series of dulcet creams.

The present mode is to have the courses fit, but few—a sensible and judicious plan, to which the wise woman will adhere, whatever may be the whim of fashion. For a dinner of six or eight people, soup or fish, preceded by a hors d'œuvre; one entrée, remove, followed by bird or cold entrée, or dressed salad or vegetable; one sweet, and a savoury, are ample, and may be simplified at will for a *tête-à-tête* dinner or a *partie carrée* by the omission of whatever items may be desired.

In a small household, where no kitchenmaid is kept, much may be done to facilitate the cook's work, and to render a rather elaborate dinner as easy to serve as a plain one, by a certain amount of consideration being bestowed upon the bill of fare. If this be arranged so that half the dinner may be prepared early in the morning, or even the day before, matters are wonderfully smoothed; and a clever housekeeper will avoid more than one fried dish in her menu, as a rule, knowing the attention frying demands of the cook. The hors d'œuvre at the beginning of dinner is a most valuable institution; it is but little trouble to prepare, and may be got ready at any time, while it gives a tardy cook five minutes' grace in which to get her soup dished; so that, besides being generally acceptable, it is a real economy of nerves and time. If both soup and fish be desired, the entrée, or even the remove, or else the chafroid or the bird, may be omitted, while

so many people nowadays are indifferent to sweets, they are often excluded altogether from a *tête-à-tête* or even a triangular dinner. Then, again, too, the mistress may save the cook trouble, and gain in effect, by her power of selection, if she arrange that at this stage of her dinner, hot and cold dishes shall be judiciously contrasted one with another. She will avoid following up a chaudfroid or a Russian salad by an equally chilly sweet; whereas, after a prawn curry, the coolness of mousse au café or riz à l'impératrice will be welcome and refreshing. It is this art of judicious selection and contrast which is needed to make the best cooked and best served dinner piquant and interesting. And the same remark applies to the relations between the sweets and the following course, the savoury, which should by rights be one of the most telling points of the dinner. Brillat Savarin's remark that a dinner without cheese is like a pretty woman with one eye, may be quoted nowadays in regard to the various daintily concocted trifles, which usually usurp the places once held by Stilton or Cheddar, Brie or Gruyère.

The choice of a cookery book for one's *vade mecum* must be regulated to a great extent by personal taste, and in most cases the fat volume we have elected as a general guide, needs supplementing by one or two smaller books on special subjects. Most housekeepers who pique themselves on their own and their cook's skill, keep a large MS. book for precious and peculiar recipes; and this is absolutely necessary, if you wish to have them accurately remembered, and also to call them to mind at the right moment. In time a volume of this order becomes a valuable possession.

For myself, I find "Francatelli's Cook's Guide" the most reliable stand-by in the way of a manual. It has

not as many recipes as some other books ; but I have never tried one from it which did not prove successful, and the chapters on "Savouries," "Salads," &c., are fuller and better than is usually the case : nor is the book ever likely to go out of date. The directions also how to prepare the recipes are lucid and detailed, and the cook who abides by Francatelli will have no reason to regret her choice. For addenda, giving more modern fashions in dishes, I may recommend the little volume "Wholesome Cookery" as extremely useful to an experienced cook, but not always sufficiently full or exact in its instructions to be a safe guide for an unpractised person. None the less, many of the recipes contained therein are both excellent and novel, and such as cannot be found elsewhere.

Besides the chosen recipes copied out in the MS. volume, a list should be kept of the various dishes your cook has tried and succeeded in, and to this every new attempt should be carefully added. This forms an extremely useful reference, which, if consulted, prevents one from falling into the error of sameness in the menu, especially if the items are classified under various headings, so that at a glance the mistress may see when ordering dinner what entrées, removes, or sweets her cook is competent to undertake without direction. A series of private marks at the side may further distinguish the various dishes, as "very good," "simple," "quickly made," "rather troublesome," &c., and these notes will simplify the careful arrangement of dinner, more than will be at first believed.

Another good plan is to make out a list of dishes every three months, and each time any one of them figures in the bill of fare to put a cross against its name on the list, so that a glance will tell if a dish has lately appeared so often at your table that there is

a chance of your wearying of it, while another erstwhile favourite has been forgotten. The various garnishings of standard dishes should also be noted underneath them in parentheses, thus :

Rump steak, with

Maître d'hôtel butter and fried potatoes,

Oyster sauce,

Fried onions, &c.,

as a dish is often made quite a different thing by its accompaniments.

These hints may appear almost absurd in their simplicity to the experienced mistress of a household ; but it is not for her I am writing, but for her younger sister or daughter, who is slowly winning her way through the difficulties of housekeeping, more arduous now than they ever were before. The only hope of mastering them, instead of letting them master us, lies in method ; and if a plan such as I have suggested be adopted, ten minutes or a quarter of an hour a day may be saved over that daily toil—ordering dinner. The less trouble the ruling of a home costs a woman, the dearer it will be to her if she feels it is not neglect of her work, but its intelligent accomplishment which makes it easy. And the more surely will she realize the serene dignity and sweetness of her title of honour, lady—"læfdig," the bread-giver—in her endeavour that the daily bread of the household shall be sweetened by her care and thought.

## III.

## TABLE GARNITURE.

FINE linen, clean and white ; silver as bright as it could be ; bubble-clear glass, and spotless porcelain, together with wax lights galore ; and after dinner a dark and polished expanse of old Spanish mahogany, wherein were reflected the golden gleam of sherry and the tawny glow of port, and in which could be caught the mirrored glimpses of the rich tints of the fruits which decked the board—these were the principles of table arrangement and decoration some thirty years ago. They are so perfect, as far as they go, that it is incumbent on us, who have adopted a more elaborate fashion of ornamenting our tables, to give a reason for the faith that is in us, and to let all our adornments have their basis in sense and simplicity. A centre arrangement and decoration has always been allowed since the times of the mediæval “salt,” and it is well to work outward from this in our minor arrangements, and so make them keep their places.

The basis which has first to be considered is the glass, china, plate, and linen which, when selected, will have to serve us for many years ; with which our various dainty devices of fruit and flowers (changing with the changing year) will have to harmonize, and which, therefore, should first harmonize with each other, and be as simple in colour and graceful in form

as possible, so as to allow us to vary our effects at will, without impairing their charm.

It is from this cause that many persons declare their preference for white dinner sets and colourless glass ; but another reason often given for the favour in which plain porcelain and crystal are held is that people like to see what they are eating, a plain centre to plates being, therefore a necessity. The same plea is urged with greater force as regards glass. Many connoisseurs of wine cannot bear that its hue should be hidden or obscured by a rival tint in the vessel which holds it. The votary of plain china and glass will therefore have the satisfaction of knowing that his taste coincides with that of the majority of diners.

But there is plainness and plainness ; and, if glass and china owe nothing to colour, and rely only on their form and substance, it is more than ever necessary that the shapes should be good, the clay of the china fine, and the crystal diamond clear. Let each be fully persuaded in his own mind in this matter ; but for myself I think the considerations both of æsthetics and economy in the matter of a dinner service are perfectly satisfied in the various reproductions of cream Leeds and Wedgwood ware which have recently appeared, and in which any objection to the monotony of a plain dinner service is overcome by the delicate warmth of the tint, and the enrichments of raised or open work. The shapes being reproduced from the finest old models are, it is needless to say, lovely, and altogether there are no dinner services equal to these for moderation in cost with elegance of effect. If, however, colour and quaintness are desired, and a commission can be executed for you in Florence, the Cantigalli pottery bought on the spot is wonderful in design and very low in price, and has the charm of being quite unlike anything usually seen in

England. The worst of it is that the paste and glaze are both so soft, that the destruction of a whole dinner set at the hands of a "breaker" (as I have known some servants described) can be accomplished in a really incredibly short space of time. But, given care and the possibility of replacing the broken pieces (not an easy matter when you have to send to Florence for them), any one who wishes for a somewhat *bizarre* but fascinating and artistic dinner set will be well satisfied with one of Cantigalli pottery.

Many people have a fondness for "blue and white," and the willow pattern and the Dresden onion pattern are now so well reproduced, and so cheap, as to prevent any one rushing into the purchase of horrors. Only in blue and white china beware of the vivid shades of the colour, or you will grow to hate the broad faces of your dinner plates ere six months have gone. Chosen rightly, a blue and white service is pleasant and homely-looking, albeit it ties one down rather as regards table decorations.

Given time, patience, a certain amount of cash, and a taste for poking about after curiosities, and perhaps one of the most satisfactory ways of obtaining a pet dinner plenishing at a reasonable price is to pick up a whole service, in separate pieces here and there, of old Nankin, Oriental, white Leeds, or Spode, whichever your worship's fancy inclines you to. This can still be done, though it is a more difficult and costly business than of yore. It does not matter the various articles differing slightly in pattern, so long as the general effect be harmonious; and in the course of your quest you are likely to come across other quaint and dainty items towards your board's perfect equipment, such as green-handled, scimitar-bladed knives, curious fish trowels adorned with pierced work, and punch ladles

with silver bowls, lovely wherewith to dispense a fruit salad, or *sorbet*, &c.

So much for china and pottery; now for the kindred question of glass. Of late years the use has grown more common of the lovely and fragile Venetian cups, beakers, and flacons, clouded with gold, threaded with white filaments, or tinged with purple—

As if in water you let die  
A bruised black-blooded mulberry.

The worst is, that the effect of these is sometimes marred by the employment of glasses of various hues on one table. If you are fortunate enough to have Venetian glass, have all the pieces of one prevailing tint. To my mind, the aventurine (gold) is the most beautiful, and is withal so decorative that it demands something of a sumptuous simplicity in the other table appointments. A number of little ferns in blue and white pots, or little white china boys trundling wheelbarrows or steering boats full of sweets between the waves of a tempestuously crumpled strip of Nagpore silk, consort ill with the splendid hues and equally splendid shapes of Venetian glass; whereas one large centre bowl of roses or rich-hued tulips, or a dish with an artistically arranged pile of different fruits, will group admirably with the golden glass.

If, however, you decide on plain, colourless glass, you will find the “whirled” glass of Messrs. Powell as charming as any plain crystal can be—all the shapes of decanters, wineglasses, and tumblers alike being remarkable for simple grace, while the wide diagonal ripple or wave gives them a distinction and richness of their own. If you do not dislike coloured glass, the olive-green Nuremberg glass, with its beauty of tone and wonderful quaint mediæval shapes, is very effective,

and goes particularly well with the cream Leeds or Wedgwood ware of which I have spoken. A summer dinner-table decked with this cream china and olive-green glass, with yellow roses for floral adornment, would be charmingly cool and refreshing.

Plate has just undergone such a sudden Renaissance among us, that the newest electro is modelled on the beautiful old forms, with slender but solid scroll handles, and rat-tails to the wide, shallow bowls of the spoons. The finish which is given to the table by the pretty little saltcellars, pepper and sugar casters, &c., need not be dwelt on. An old-fashioned silver or Sheffield bread basket is a pretty possession; but if it be wanting, and bread be served on a wooden trencher, let the latter be as plainly turned as possible. If you possess one of the oak and silver salad bowls, it serves admirably when denuded of its china lining and filled in with a white napkin instead, to hand baked potatoes in, or a plain wooden bowl may be used for the same purpose. Menu slates should always be used, even for a *tête-à-tête* dinner, and the nicest, to my taste, are the simplest—little upright slabs of plain white biscuit, with the tube for flowers fixed behind, but invisible from the front. A more elegant arrangement is to have the card slipped into a silver hand-mirror frame, and passed round the table.

Beer jugs are rather difficult matters wherein to be original, and nothing surpasses the brown earthenware ones with the old English hunting scene in relief thereon. None the less if you rejoice in an old Toby Philpott, a Delft or Gris de Flandres pitcher, or one of Turner's now rare huntsman's jugs, let it find its rightful use. The jolliest tumblers for ale are the barrel-shaped ones, which are not always easy to get; but if you possess any tankards, let the ale be served in

them. Nothing looks worse than beer in a delicate, undersized glass.

If spirits are needed, the old English square-cut glass bottles or the Black Forest hour-glass ones cannot be bettered; while the small dark-brown glass flagons with squat bodies and round handles stuck to their short necks are inoffensive, even if not beautiful.

A word as to napery, for an ugly pattern on the damask cloth often helps to destroy the beauty of the whole table. Avoid sprawling flowers and trellised ornaments, and be careful that the design is a conventional one, and not too large for your table. Nothing, to my thinking, is so beautiful as the plain white damask guiltless of pattern, especially if a table centre be used. A *moiré* pattern also is charming in effect, and Japanese zigzag, crackle, and hawthorn designs are also very suitable. Mrs. Tulliver's liking for spots is not to be despised; they look prim, delicate, and pretty. Of course the napkins should match the cloth.

Unbleached linen woven with white often has a warm and charming effect, of which a wise woman will be glad to avail herself; but if you do so, I warn you to be prepared for objections. Your husband even may not like it. Men are more conventional than women, and the whiteness of table napery is as much an article of faith with them as that of a dress shirt.

## IV.

## TABLE DECORATION.

THE present chapter is so closely allied in subject to my last, that I may as well take up my text where I laid it down, namely, at the table linen, and so commence laying the table in good earnest.

First of all the shape of table most suitable for a small room must be considered. A round or oval one has the advantage of saving space, and for the dinners of six or eight people at the utmost, we are at present treating of, a table of 3 feet 6 inches to 4 feet broad and rather more in length, with two leaves to let in, would be quite large enough. A table more than 4 feet wide, when the party is small, somewhat hinders sociability, besides blocking up the room. For this number an oval black oak Jacobean eight-legged table is charming, and they may be found of a larger size, if your room will allow of it. Another pretty form of dining-room table I have seen is a large old-fashioned spindle-legged Pembroke, which when open would dine eight, two on each side; but when shut up would be small for two, the wide leaves precluding any one sitting at the sides when they were let down.

The question of light must next be considered. There is no prettier fashion than that of the shaded wax lights in their tall candlesticks or double candelabra, placed

on the table itself ; but when the latter is small, they take up a great deal of room which can ill be spared ; and a standing lamp is open to the same objection. A hanging dinner lamp, with a large silk shade spreading widely enough not to focus the light entirely on one spot of the table-cloth, leaving those dining in outer darkness, is with a small table the best expedient. If you happen to have pretty candlesticks you wish to utilize, they will be quite as effective on the sideboard (which is seldom sufficiently illuminated), and the absence of lights on the table will give you ample room for your centre ornaments.

Before considering the decoration of the table, a few words as to the laying of each place may not be entirely useless. Personally I dislike to have spoons and forks in front of me as well as to the right and left, till one is as fenced in as the Light Brigade itself ; while another small matter which annoys me in a private house is a napkin so elaborately folded as to recall an Italian restaurant ; the simple diamond folding is quite sufficiently ornamental.

Teach your maid to get the arrangement of each cover exactly similar, and to see that the lines on either side the table between one claret glass and another, &c., are straight as a die, that all the distances are evenly proportioned, and that all the articles are placed so as to be as little as may be in any one's way, while as near as possible to every one's hand. Just above the forks a small salt-cellar and pepper-caster (cayenne also, if liked) should be put for each person ; and below these, to the left, a tiny plate, containing six or eight olives or some salted almonds. These latter, however, many people prefer served hot with the coffee after dinner. Salad plates should not be placed on the table till needed ; then they are set on the left hand.

Most persons object to too large an array of knives and forks, and would prefer to have them supplied as need arises ; and everybody dislikes the huge weapons we have wielded for so many years. The dessert spoon and fork and the cheese knife are large enough for every purpose, and the table will look neater if they only are employed. The glasses set on the table should be those suited to the wines.

The laying of the sideboard and side table properly conduces a good deal to the appearance of the dining-room, and the dainty sideboard cloths now used are another charming item in a well-stocked linen cupboard. The German damask ones, with patterns in blue, gold, or red on the white ground, are very pretty, and may be made quite beautiful by outlining the design with coloured silk of a rather deeper shade. White damask may be enriched in the same manner, and further elaborated by darning in the ground with the same shade of colour as used for outlining. Homespun linen adorned with coarse old lace, drawn work, or macramé, suits an old oak sideboard better than almost anything else.

The laying of the sideboard must, of course, depend upon its size. If it needs supplementing with a side table, the sideboard itself should be as pretty as possible, leaving the less ornamental requisites for the side table. Many people nowadays object to the dessert being brought into the hot dining-room till it is wanted, but those who are less fastidious will gladly avail themselves of the opportunity of it to decorate the sideboard as nothing but fruit can do. With the dessert may be placed the wine, the powdered sugar and cream, and any other pretty accessories ; while extra plates, glasses, forks, &c., mineral water siphons, and bread may be relegated to the side table.

Very trifling, the reader may say who is happy in the possession of an excellent parlourmaid ; " Every good servant knows these details." True indeed, but this is written for the large and unhappily increasing class who have not good servants ; and an inexperienced maid is sure to need telling, not only the matters I have mentioned, but a thousand details I have not space to catalogue here. If a maid knows the right size to cut pieces of bread, and remembers to wash beer bottles bright before she brings them to the dining-room, to warm the claret, lay the cloth perfectly straight and smooth, and range the knives and forks as evenly as a well-drilled squadron of soldiers, you may be sure she has been trained, for these habits do not come by nature.

For table decoration there should, to my thinking, be one larger ornament to form the centre thereof ; but this is a matter of taste, as is the question of table-centres so-called. I must confess I am not greatly enamoured of the oblongs of plush or brocade, which still obtain among us, or of the crumpled-up expanses of Nagpore silk, dotted about with any small objects in old silver the hostess may happen to possess, from tea-caddies to snuff-boxes. If a table-centre be used, it should to my fancy be washable ; but this, again, is a matter of individual opinion. Very beautiful ones may be manufactured by outlining white damask with coloured silk, as suggested for sideboard cloths, and a complete table-cloth of white linen, with a wide inserted strip of old cut or laid work, let in down the middle and lined with colour, is both effective and original. Flax thread embroidery may be utilized for table-centres, and so may any antique needlework, whether Eastern or Western in its origin.

It is the fashion now to have table decorations very

low, and so growing plants are out of favour. But, properly chosen, they are always sweet and fair, and last longer than cut flowers. The recent craze for spreading flowers on the cloth itself is pretty if carried out with discretion, and if the blossoms are not too straggling or heavy in their arrangement; but the flowers should start from a centre, such as the base of a dish or flagon, and flow from thence round the bases of the other ornaments in a well-ordered wreath; or they may be banked up round the central objects, or, if a table-centre be used, may border it on either side.

Fruit also is not often now seen on a dinner-table where the mistress piques herself on the novelty of her arrangements; the reason given being the sensible one, that most persons do not care to have their dessert before their eyes during the whole of dinner. But a well-arranged group of various fruit is so beautiful that this consideration may surely be waived. In winter oranges and lemons, arranged together with the green leaves of bay or myrtle carelessly piled in a tazza or pottery basket, have a summery Southern effect very different to that of the former fruit primly arranged by itself in a flat dessert dish. A pot of growing strawberries, laden with flowers and fruit, is always beautiful, provided the pot itself be not too obtrusive in size. If glass tubes or vases be used, they should be of the same colour as the table glass. The green Nuremberg glass looks lovely with yellow or pink or dull purple tulips in spring, or meadow-sweet and scarlet field poppies in summer. French poppies, pink and puce, are also most effective with the olive-green glass, and so are, of course, a thousand other flowers. Orange tiger lilies enhance the splendour of gold-hued Venetian glass, and so do vari-coloured irises—blue and purple, bronze-brown, gold and pale yellow. A magni-

ficient colour *coup* is easily struck by a great mass of pink, crimson, and white peonies, in a large china bowl or Nankin tureen; and if you have any fine plate or charger, be it Chinese, Persian, Rhodian, Italian faience, or Hispano-Moresque, you may make it minister to your table decoration by placing a flat semi-circular, gracefully-arranged spray or wreath of any flower upon it, so as only to partially hide its beauties, and make it serve as the centre ornament. It may, if you please, be filled with rose-water.

If a specimen vase be put to each person, they are better small and low, or they are apt to get knocked over. For dessert services, the modern white Leeds and Wedgwood are as pretty as anything; and so are the Nuremberg finger-glasses, with their cool olive tint and pretty bosses. Do not forget the sprays of oak-leaved geranium, lemon verbena, or myrtle; or else the slice of lemon to float in these last. D'oyleys may be made of scraps of coarse old lace or Eastern embroidery. Those worked by the Turkish refugees are very beautiful, and for everyday use I have seen some charming little round ones in Irish damask, with Renaissance dragons and scrolls in blue or red. These, outlined by hand with silk, would be smart enough for any occasion. For the cigarettes handed round after dinner there are any number of dainty receptacles now made in polished wood or morocco, or one of the little brocade trays so much in vogue lately does perfectly well, and looks very pretty.

## V.

## HORS D'ŒUVRES.

“ Well begun is half finished.”

THE art of composing a menu is not to be attained in a day ; the arrangement of the various parts in connection with each other, and also as a whole, being what chiefly distinguishes a really good dinner from a meal composed of dishes excellent in themselves and well cooked, but bearing no relation, or an inharmonious one, to each other. In the matter of *hors d'œuvres*, which open the dinner, care should be taken to distinguish them in character from the savouries which bring it to a conclusion, though there are many dishes which are equally suitable for both purposes. The origin of the *hors d'œuvre* is derived from the Russian “banquet” or the Swedish “smörgasbord,” wherewith those nations preface a more solid repast ; but the Slavonic custom of accompanying the *hors d'œuvres* by a *petit verre* of Kümmel has not found favour at present at English dinner-tables. Having tried it at the house of some Polish friends, I may say that the effect of it on myself was to make the whole of the repast which followed, from turbot to gooseberry tart, appear flavoured with carraway ; but to those who like novelties, I may suggest the introduction of the liqueur to accompany the appetizer when the latter is composed

of Russian cucumbers, sardines, anchovies, or other viands of the smoked or pickled description.

Unquestionably for eight months of the year the king of *hors d'œuvres* is the oyster. There are oysters and oysters; they are, however, no longer as ruinous as they were some few years back, and have the advantage of making little or no demand on the cook's time or care. But let them be served Yankee fashion, four or six on each plate in their deep shells, on a bed of crushed ice, and the quarter of a lemon in the centre. Have the brown bread-and-butter daintily cut, and cayenne, black pepper, and Chili vinegar handed round as swiftly as may be. Little old-fashioned oyster forks, with handles of agate, silver, or green ivory, are convenient and pretty, and will be found useful with many other *hors d'œuvres*.

The most generally adopted class of provocatives (as they were called in the last century) consists of smoked or pickled trifles. Among these, caviare ranks first. If the large-roed, unpressed Astrachan caviare can be obtained, it has but one fault—it is too good for its purpose. As Dick Swiveller said, “beer cannot be tasted in a sip,” and it is doing good caviare scant honour to make it only the preface to a meal. When served as a savoury, it may be spread rather thickly on a hot-toasted and buttered pikelet or crumpet, in imitation of the Russian mode, but as a *hors d'œuvre* it is, I think, better on brown bread-and-butter; toast is too tough. It should never be scraped in a thin layer over the bread, but laid on generously. Lemon should be served with it, not squeezed over it, as some people dislike it.

There are many other preparations of fish roes which are excellent, an especially delicate one, which comes from Greece, being noteworthy. It is, however, diffi-

cult to procure. The smoked cod roes are nice as a change.

Anchovies, sardines, lax, tunny, smoked salmon, and herrings preserved in white wine are all good, and may be served plain or pounded with butter, seasoned, and spread on toast. The old, simple fashion of having four or five kinds of *hors d'œuvres* at once, such as anchovies, olives, thin slices of Brunswick or Bologna sausage, reindeer tongue, &c., is a very good one. They may be served either in small separate dishes, so that each guest may choose what he will, or a small plate containing an assortment may be placed to each cover. For these varied *hors d'œuvres* the Russian warehouse may be recommended as providing a variety of outlandish, but toothsome, relishes. Stuffed olives should be served on circular pieces of fried bread, spread with some kind of savoury butter, and the same remark applies to another of the simplest and best *hors d'œuvres*, the plover's egg, with which to tamper further is mere wasteful and ridiculous excess.

Stuffed eggs are a very favourite *hors d'œuvre* with many people, and the recipes for them are legion. Perhaps they are a somewhat heavy introduction to dinner; but they make an agreeable change. Caviare eggs are particularly good, and more novel than those prepared with anchovy or Parmesan; the latter of these two, indeed, is out of place at the beginning of a meal. Another foreign fashion is to commence the dinner with risotto; but this very excellent dish is decidedly stodgy, as is its near relative pilaff, and both deserve a fuller description as savouries.

Canapees and crusts are again without number, and to single out recipes for a few of the best would more than fill a chapter of this book. Very delicate and savoury sandwiches make by no means a bad beginning;

but care must be taken that they are sufficiently piquant. Epicurean butter with a thin slice of cucumber is particularly good, and such sandwiches look better cut out with a round tin cutter.

Quite another class of appetizers which fulfil their purpose well are those of the vegetable order. Radishes will be found very acceptable, and with them may be served the freshest inner leaves of a long lettuce or watercress—without any dressing : salt is all they need when introduced thus, but a little brown bread-and-butter may be handed with them. In the hot summer weather, iced melon, eaten with pepper and salt, is an especially delicious *hors d'œuvre* ; and so is a fruit, which is a rarity in England, but is sometimes imported—the avocado or alligator pear, vulgarly known in sub-tropical latitudes as subaltern's butter. As an innovation in *hors d'œuvres* it would be difficult to surpass this fruit, which is eaten with pepper and salt, and by the aid of a spoon. Its peculiar and exquisite flavour cannot be described.

A few words on bread may not be out of place here, for the diversity of taste in regard to pease pudding (hinted at in the nursery rhyme) is nothing to compare with the difference of tastes concerning the best form in which bread should be served at dinner. Variety is charming, and home-made bread may be supplemented by French or Vienna rolls one day, and those again give place to brown bread the next. The German rye bread, either brown or black, with its pleasant sub-acid taste, is greatly relished by many people. A rack of dry toast is generally acceptable, and so is oat-cake, whether served as bread or eaten with the cheese. The old-fashioned milk-rolls, when well made, are hard to beat, and, in my opinion, are a long way better as a dinner accompaniment than the long thin sticks of

dough, baked crisply all through, and strewn with salt, which have supplanted them. Still, these are good in their way, as also is pulled bread. Provision has always in these days to be made for the possibility of a guest suffering from dyspepsia, and dry biscuits, either Bath Oliver, water, or, better still, Passover cakes, are as necessary to be kept in reserve as are whisky and mineral waters.

## VI.

## SOUPS.

THERE is hardly any course of a dinner as to which it is more difficult to be original than soup, and most people will declare originality to be thrown away in this respect. The real *bon vivant* will declare that, with the exception of turtle, there is but one soup, the best, clearest, strongest, and most delicately-flavoured consommé possible. With the accompanying glass of good sherry, there is no introduction to a meal which so revives and refreshes a jaded palate, or so stimulates a weary brain. But in a household where the stock-pot is but modestly plenished, such consommé cannot be everyday fare, and in the winter especially a less ethereal and stimulating pottage is often welcome. The fashion of iced soups, introduced of late, is still somewhat recondite, and, after all, is better suited for suppers than dinner. They may be found a welcome novelty in very sultry weather, but will hardly meet with general acceptance.

To begin with economical soups in which there is no need for an elaborate stock, we must first mention the pot-au-feu. A piece of fresh silverside, weighing about 5 lbs., stewed gently for three hours, with vegetables and herbs, two tablespoonfuls of mushroom ketchup, and a glass of sherry, will produce three pints of

excellent soup, needing but little clarifying. The beef itself may be served either the day before the soup is required, or for lunch when the soup is needed for the evening; it is equally good hot or cold. If the vegetables are shaped with a vegetable-cutter, and some stoned olives are added to the dish, the "bouilli" is both a pretty and savoury remove—if it be not done to rags.

Stewed ox-tail also should produce quite enough stock to be served separately as soup for four or even six people, *pace* cookery-books; and the liquor chickens, fowls, or rabbits are boiled in, if duly flavoured with vegetables, makes quite sufficiently good stock for mulligatawny, Victoria, or ordinary white soups, though it will form a better foundation for them if the bones of the bird that was boiled in the broth be afterwards broken up and reboiled in it for two hours. I may add that the same stock makes an excellent foundation for aspic jelly.

The garnishing for stocks is simple, and when once the cook has the list of its components, there should be no more flavourless broth known in the kitchen. Onion, carrot, turnip, celery or celery seed, thyme, marjoram, parsley, and a bay leaf; cloves (only two or three), a lump of sugar, and (if liked) a clove of garlic—that is the formula. Leeks and tarragon are an addition, if the flavour of the latter be approved; to my mind, it glorifies clear soup as nothing else can do. Any trimmings or rinds of bacon or ham will improve the stock, which should be skimmed from time to time, strained, and left to settle till cold, when it must be freed of the top cake of fat previous to being clarified if it needs that process. When soup vegetables are scarce, it is a good plan to have some of the dried Julienne at hand to use in their place. No cook should

rely for the quality of her stock on Liebig, but a jar of his extract is extremely useful to strengthen or colour soups or gravies when they need such addition, and there are many cases where a "bit of glaze" is prescribed in recipes in which Liebig will answer better. The French pastilles de légumes should also be kept at hand, but they need to be used with extreme caution, or otherwise they give the soup a disagreeable burnt taste; a quarter of a ball, or even less, will sufficiently colour a quart of soup.

The flavouring given above will serve for most purposes. Mulligatawny is easily and economically prepared by adding the remains of a curry served the previous day to some well-flavoured stock, and slightly thickening it with rice flour, or it may be cleared in the usual way as a change. Victoria soup, which I spoke of above, is a very delicate white soup of Francatelli's device, said to be the only soup eaten by Her Majesty the Queen during the time he presided over the Windsor kitchen. It consists of rice or pearl barley, slowly stewed in white stock, and then rubbed through a fine sieve (a small portion of the stewed grain being left whole and added afterwards to the soup); with this is mixed a generous portion of cream, and the result is one of the few soups which would be equally good iced.

Fish soup is not as well known as it ought to be in most English kitchens; but it deserves recognition. If a cod's head and shoulders or a piece of turbot be boiled in less water than is usually the case, in a smaller kettle, and with less salt, all that is necessary to convert the remains into stock is to replace in the water the bones, skin, &c. of the fish when it comes from table—having cleared away what remains of the flesh for other purposes—with the same vegetable

garnish as I have before described, omitting the turnip, but adding a blade of mace, and boil for an hour and a half. Not more water should be used than will cause the stock, when strained and cold, to assume the appearance of a clear, limpid jelly. This broth is the best of all foundations for bouillabaisse, bisque, oyster soup, or fish mulligatawny (which may be specially mentioned as an admirable soup, garnished with picked shrimps or prawns). Fish stock is also very good thickened with a liaison of a little cream and two yolks of eggs, or simply strained and served over poached eggs, one in each plate.

Bouillabaisse I do not attempt to discourse upon. Its mysteries are too sublime. Bisque is easier to unriddle, and though *écrevisses* be rare and somewhat costly, a very fair bisque may be made either of crab or lobster. But of all soups it needs the most careful preparations; the small claws and shells, &c. of the fish used should be well pounded in a mortar, boiled for a minute or two in light French white wine, strained, and added to the soup, which, indeed, should be largely compounded of wine. Francatelli directs sherry, but I hold Chablis or Graves preferable; while the thickening of the soup should be composed of the lightly-fried crusts of French rolls, pounded and sifted; on no account should flour be used for this purpose.

A delicious recipe of Francatelli's is Italian soup, an excellent way of utilizing rabbits. The same author's recipes for grouse and other game soups are also admirable, if followed with judgment.

For sun-dried turtle (one of the advantages of the present day) a good stock is really necessary. Unsophisticated turtle soup, even prepared by the refined talent of a black cook, is a perfectly different dish from

the thick or clear turtle of City banquets ; but then, the Lord Mayor wots not of the deliciousness of a fresh turtle's egg broken into the soup. The Mansion House standard of turtle is the one generally accepted in England, whereof to fall short means failure, the failure in many cases resulting from the inferior quality of the wine used in flavouring the soup. Better no wine than bad, and those who think any vintage is "good enough for cooking" make a fatal mistake. Wine should never be lavishly used in cookery ; but let the little used be thoroughly good of its kind.

A most useful and economical class of soups are the vegetable purées, and these, as a rule, are best made *maigre* with milk. There is, however, an exception to the rule, namely, tomato, which in that case is apt to curdle, and for which stock is necessary. Green pea soup and Cressy and Palestine are the best known of these purées for summer and winter respectively ; but asparagus purée is delicious, and so is soubise—onion soup, thickened judiciously with bread, and, of course, passed through a sieve. Cucumber makes a very delicate purée ; and vegetable-marrow, that most watery and insipid of vegetables, is not to be despised for this purpose. A very fair green pea soup can be made from the pods alone, and properly concocted celery soup is exquisite. All these soups are mightily improved by the addition of a *liaison* of cream and eggs, but this thickening should never be allowed to boil. It should be well beaten up by degrees with three or four spoonfuls of soup, and then stirred quickly into the soup itself the instant before it is poured into the tureen.

The old-fashioned white soups are rather out of favour now, the white soups of to-day being thinner, more delicate, and more distinctive in flavour, and have the further advantage of neither making such a demand on

the patience of the cook or on the sum allowed for the weekly housekeeping.

I have said nothing about the familiar soups, mock turtle, Scotch broth, pea soup, cock-a-leekie, and hotch-potch, because, though excellent meals in themselves, they are for that very reason unfitted to be the commencement of a dinner. Their real place is at lunch on a cold, frosty day.

But the soup served four days out of the seven in most houses is some form or another of consommé, and it is necessary to remember the different forms of garnishing the stock so that it shall have a certain variety. *Bonne femme*, *jardinière*, and *Brunoise* are all favourite forms of soup made by the addition of various vegetables, differently cut up, to the clear stock. To my own taste, there is nothing so simple and good as small squares of savoury custard, and this is easily prepared earlier in the day. If ravioli or quenelles are being prepared for other purposes, a few may be reserved for the soup of the next day. They must be very small. A poached egg in each plate is very nice, and has the advantage of being a really practical addition to the dinner of an invalid; then many people are fond of *croûte au pot*. A few asparagus points, green peas, or French beans, cut in dice, look well either by themselves or together with the savoury custard or quenelles. Last year the fashion obtained of little cubes or balls of various colours in the soup; the black and white ones being formed respectively of truffle and white of egg, but this is a somewhat troublesome garnish for every day. If any one clings fondly to the old fashion of maccaroni or vermicelli in the soup, it is a necessity to have them boiled first in water, and well drained; as if they are boiled in the soup they impart a disagreeable gruelly taste of stale flour.

When clear soup is served, a small dish of grated Parmesan may be handed round with it, and also powdered sugar, if liked. Fried croûtons, with purées, should be very daintily cut, and fried a light gold brown, and not more than the third of an inch square. They may be prepared early in the day, and made hot in the oven. Celery salt in a caster is acceptable to many people, especially with purées. Parmesan is also served with tomato or Italian soups, and another good addition to these latter is the trimmings of cheese sticks, rolled out thin, stamped with the tiniest of tin cutters into discs or crescents, and baked of a light gold-brown. I have forgotten to say that the stock for everyday clear soup may be made of bones flavoured according to the formula given earlier in this chapter. Any trimmings of meat, &c. can be added—the bones or carcase of a fowl being a specially desirable addition. If carefully made, properly cleared with white of eggs and flavoured with a little Liebig and sherry, such clear soup leaves little to be desired.

## VII.

## FISH AND FISH SAUCES.

THE great majority of English people, especially English men, prefer their fish itself plainly dressed, for the reason that it is usually excellent of its kind, firm, fresh, and delicate. The English epicure may appreciate elaborate cooking in the matter of entrées, and those varieties of dishes which our forefathers classed together under the somewhat contemptuous collective name of kickshaws; but he does not care much for eels en matelote, or saumon au bleu, or sole aux fines herbes by the side of his turbot, his cut from the very middle of the finest salmon, his perfectly-fried sole, or the red mullet which, wrapped in its envelope of oiled paper, and unchanged by herbs or sauce, preserves the exquisite flavour which is all its own—the woodcock of the sea.

Such being the case, the sauce to be served with the fish gains in importance, and before entering on the subject of dressed fish, I would fain say a few words on the subject of the best sauces to accompany various fish when plainly cooked, suggesting (as I have done before) that the name of each fish be entered in a book of private recipes, with the sauces most approved of as its accompaniments bracketed opposite, so that a moment's glance will suffice to show what choice is open in the matter.

Salmon, the king of fish, really needs no sauce when boiled, beyond melted butter and cucumber; but, to my mind, the melted butter usually known by that name is advantageously replaced by pure fresh butter, oiled and skimmed, to which is added, when it is boiling, some tiny sprigs of picked parsley, and, the instant these are crisp, a spoonful of French or tarragon vinegar. Dutch sauce is excellent with salmon, as, indeed, it is with all boiled fish, lending it piquancy, but not destroying the flavour. I consider it far preferable with turbot to the cloying and indigestible lobster sauce of our fathers; but if any one be attached to that rich and substantial compound, I may remind them of the legacy left by the Irish peer on his deathbed as a full atonement to the son his extravagance had impoverished and embarrassed—"Crab sauce is better than lobster sauce."

Of late, ravigote sauce, which is simply a mayonnaise, coloured green and flavoured with chopped herbs, has been much in favour with hot salmon. Personally, I am old-fashioned enough to prefer it with cold salmon, and when, as in the summer, the fish is served cold instead of hot, another novel and excellent accompaniment thereto, hailing, I believe, from Norway, is horse-radish sauce.

With cod there is nothing so good as that variety of melted butter to which, when well made, many of us fondly cling as the best sauce in the world, *i. e.* oyster sauce, which also adds flavour to rump steak, and glorifies that somewhat tasteless bird, boiled turkey. But then it must be oyster sauce, not simply melted butter, with a few oysters put in at the last moment. If oysters cannot be obtained, mussels are no contemptible substitute; but the same rules apply to mussel sauce as to oyster. It must be made with very

little flour, a great deal of butter, if possible, fish stock should take the place of water, and the liquor of the shell fish should be added thereunto, while care must be taken that the sauce does not boil, or the oysters will be tough. The addition of lemon, nutmeg, or anchovy is a matter of taste.

Another old English sauce which has its merits when served with boiled cod, whiting, or haddock is egg sauce. The eggs should be divided into eight parts, not chopped fine, and the melted butter should be made rich, clear, and transparent, with a delicate dash of lemon-juice ; and here I may add by way of parenthesis anent melted butter, how odd it is, considering this sauce is supposed to be our sole invention and idea in the line, that we so seldom meet with it well made. It is not the fault of cookery books ; in most of these one finds a reliable recipe for melted butter, which, if tried, would prove excellent in its results ; it is the fault of cooks. They will think melted butter is better made with milk than with water, whereas the former entirely prevents the transparency which should distinguish this sauce ; they will, when induced to use water, have it hot instead of cold, mix it with flour first into a lumpy paste, and then add a piece of butter, which naturally floats on the top of the mixture in oil, instead of being incorporated therewith, as it is if the right sequence is followed, by the butter and flour being first kneaded together into a perfectly smooth paste, and the cold water added thereunto. They will consider five minutes ample time for the concoction of melted butter, whereas a quarter of an hour at least of gentle simmering, stirring, and lifting is needed to destroy the rawness of the flour, and to give the sauce that clearness and smoothness which are the charms of well-made melted butter.

John Dory is a fish which once ranked higher in the estimation of epicures than it does at present; but, to my mind, there is no flat fish, not excepting turbot, of so fine a flavour, and Dutch sauce enhances its claims to appreciation, though the saying of the wit and *gourmet* of the last century, that no marriage ever gave him so much pleasure as the union of good John Dory with delicate Ann Chovy, deserves remembrance. But let your anchovy sauce consist of well-made melted butter, with a foundation of fish stock if possible, and to this add, not the flavourless essence of anchovies, but four or five anchovies washed, boned, and pounded with butter and a grate of nutmeg, and rubbed through a sieve, then stirred into the sauce. Capers are a good addition. Shrimp sauce should be made after the same fashion, the heads and shells being pounded in a mortar with two boned anchovies and a very little nutmeg and cayenne. A large lump of this butter should be added to the sauce as well as the picked shrimps, and what is left thereof may be utilized, spread on toast, as a savoury for the next day's dinner. Lobster or crab butters, made by pounding the inferior parts of the fish in the same way, should be used in these sauces also.

With fried fish I think sauces unnecessary; a quartered lemon, cayenne, and bread-and-butter are the best accompaniments to fried soles or whiting, even as they are to whitebait or smelts, and fried parsley is the prettiest garnish. If, however, anything further be liked, anchovy, shrimp, or maître d'hôtel butter, served in pats, is preferable to a liquid sauce. Should you hold an opposite opinion, tomato sauce may be approved of with fried soles or filleted whittings, and mussel, matelote, or piquante sauce will be found to agree excellently with spatch-cocked eels.

With boiled mackerel there is no sauce so individual

and so excellent as green gooseberry (made, of course, without sugar), and you should be sure, when this fish is part of the day's dinner, to let the bones reappear at the end of the repast as a "devil." They must be grilled crisply, and served very hot.

I have no room left to write of stewed or grilled fish, and must reserve these methods, together with dressed fish in general, for another paper ; but, after all, the best advice I can give any young housewife, anxious to know "how best to keep her Lent," is to induce her husband to take her down to Greenwich, and there have a fish dinner, which will teach her more of the possibilities of *maigre* cookery than will a thousand cookery books, and should make her return eager to emulate the feats of the Greenwich *chef*.

## VIII.

## DRESSED FISH.

I DO not intend dealing with the very elaborate methods of cooking dressed fish, wherein the fish plays quite a subordinate part to the forcemeat, truffles, crayfish, &c. wherewith it is garnished. In the first place, these elaborate dishes have greatly gone out of fashion; and, in the second, they are too troublesome and extravagant to find their rightful place in these papers. A matelote of eel, or sole aux fines herbes, is quite sufficient to prove your cook's powers for a dinner of six or eight people, even on a gala day; while a turban of soles à la Cardinale will need all her dexterity, taste, and patience.

One of the simplest forms of dressed fish, and one which is always popular, is Trafalgar salmon, *i. e.* plainly broiled slices or cutlets of salmon, served with a garnish of hot piccalilli. It has also the advantage of being prepared in ten minutes, with but little trouble. Cod likewise is good grilled or broiled in slices, and served with piquante sauce. Red mullets should always be cooked en papillote; but seasoning and sauce may be added or not, according to taste, though many epicures think such additions make the fish too rich.

Filleted soles or whittings make a pretty dish, each fillet rolled up separately with an inner layer of fish

forcemeat, which is a most important article for a cook to make well, as by itself it forms the staple of a variety of fish entrées. It may be composed either of cooked or raw fish (the latter makes a better and firmer mixture), may be steamed in a mould as a fish pudding or soufflé, shaped into cutlets or balls, and fried as croquettes, or poached as quenelles. For puddings or cutlets, the panada wherewith the pounded fish is mixed should be made of soaked bread-crumbs; but this is apt to make quenelles (which should be poached in boiling stock made from the bones of the fish) too soft, whereas a panada of flour binds the forcemeat firmly together. It is also a good plan, when the quenelles are shaped—a matter demanding some experience, or a practical lesson from a good cook—to dip them in whipped white of egg before poaching them. Well-made fish quenelles, with an oyster deftly inserted in the midst of each, are among the most excellent and delicate of fish entrées, the sauce being made quite simply of fish stock, thickened with a liaison of cream and yolk of egg.

Sturgeon would be cloying if too often eaten; but, as it seldom comes into the market, it makes a welcome change. It may be either stewed, roasted, or grilled, and should be served with a rich sauce, such as Bourguignonne (brown sauce with truffles, onions, mushrooms, and red wine), or a sauce piquante. It is particularly good stewed slowly in stock, with fresh mushrooms and button onions, with which a little lemon-juice, thyme, and half a glass of sherry are a great improvement.

Stewed fish is seldom met with, yet there are few better ways of cooking many varieties thereof. Eels or lampreys are never so good as when well stewed either en matelote, or more simply. In many cases where wine

is set down in recipes for stewed fish, however, cider will be found an admirable substitute (a mackerel stewed in cider is especially good). A simple way of cooking fillets of fish is to place them in a sauté pan with lemon-juice, butter, chopped eschalot, parsley, and a little French white wine, and so slowly sauté them; button mushrooms may be added. They may be similarly cooked in the oven.

Small fish are very good wrapped in buttered paper, sprinkled with sweet herbs and broiled or baked; while filleted fish fried in batter make delicious fritters, if they are properly seasoned in oiled butter wherein has been mixed a little lemon-juice and cayenne, it may be with a suspicion of eschalot and a sprinkling of parsley. Water souchet is insufficiently appreciated among us; but dabs, slips, or flounders cannot be better treated, and it makes a variety when salmon is in season to have it served in a souchet. A very little grated horseradish is a good addition to the souchet broth, which may be either weak bright stock or the water in which the fish was boiled, and about forty small sprigs of picked parsley, a lump of sugar, and a little pepper and salt. It should be served in a deep dish, and brown bread-and-butter handed round.

Salmon or trout "au bleu" is a favourite French way of cooking fish. It is simply simmering in equal quantities of broth ("court bouillon" as it is called), flavoured with herbs and vegetables, and claret or vin ordinaire.

Sole à la Normande is an exquisite dish when well prepared, and may be converted into sole au gratin by the addition of bread-crumbs (this, however, is a matter of taste), but neither mushrooms nor mussels must be spared in its garnishing—the latter, especially, are all-important. These dishes and sole aux fines herbes need

the extraction of the fish's backbone, and, unless your cook is specially neat-handed, it is better to ask the fishmonger to accomplish this for you.

Whitebait is usually regarded by the good plain cook as a crucial test, to which it is unfair to submit her powers, though nothing is really more simple than its preparation. It should be remembered, however, by a mistress that this dainty must be fried in a wire basket, plunged into a stewpan or saucepan, so full of boiling fat that the whole of the fish are immersed at once. No cook worthy the name needs telling this, but a young housekeeper may not understand how indispensable the wire basket is, not only for whitebait but also for rissoles, croquettes, fried parsley, potatoes, and many other things. The frequent failures of attempts to cook whitebait also arise from the fish not being thoroughly dried, and as thoroughly covered with fine sifted flour. They should be scattered on a cloth thickly strewn with flour, tossed together with the flour backward and forward in the cloth, and then thrown into a coarse cane sieve, so that the superfluous flour may be shaken from them ; or a shake in the wire basket before it is plunged into the boiling fat will accomplish the same purpose.

Whitebait should always be served in two relays, the second lot being devilled, *i.e.* sprinkled thickly with black pepper after they are cooked, and plunged once more for an instant—no longer—into the boiling fat.

Why are sprats held in such light esteem among us ? Well fried, and served with lemon, cayenne, and brown bread-and-butter, they deserve attention, and their cheapness will recommend them to economical housewives. Mussels, too, are inexpensive luxuries which appear but too seldom on our tables. A prejudice exists against them, but if the fishmonger can guarantee

that they are dredged from deep waters away from the shore, and the cook can be trusted to remove the little piece of weed from each fish, they may be eaten fearlessly. They are good as soup or as sauce, and equally good stewed, scalloped, or in a steak pie or pudding, while, as before said, they give the crowning merit to sole à la Normande ; but perhaps they are best of all La Rochelle fashion—that is, steeped in oiled butter with a little lemon-juice or tarragon vinegar, cayenne, and a hint of eschalot ; then rolled separately first in fine bread-crumbs, next in beaten egg, then again in bread-crumbs, and so fried of a golden yellow, as crisply delicious to the taste as they are enticing to the eye.

Mayonnaises of fish are frequently served now after the soup, and make an agreeable change, especially in hot weather ; but these will be more properly dealt with under the head of salads and cold entrées.

Scollops of lobster served in the quarter shells of the fish (small lobsters should be used, so that a shell may be served to each guest) form a very pretty dressed fish ; but English cooks are too apt to reduce the lobster for this dish to a mash, instead of first making a rich sauce of the inferior parts of the fish, and the pith, coral, and spawn, all pounded and passed through a sieve, and stirred together with a little good white sauce, anchovy, lemon, nutmeg, and cayenne ; and then tossing lightly together in this the meat of the tail and claws cut in small dice. One most important point as regards scolloped lobster, or oysters, is to have the bread-crumbs, which mask them, previously fried of a light golden-brown in butter. If white dry bread-crumbs be used, the dish is spoiled both in look and taste.

The two following recipes may be new to many of

my readers. The first converts that humble fish, the fresh herring, into a dish worthy any table. The second is of Greek origin.

Clean and wipe four fresh herrings, cut off their heads and tails, but do not wash them ; make three slight incisions slantwise on either side of each fish, and rub them all over with French mustard (English mustard mixed with tarragon vinegar serves quite as well), into which you have stirred a clove of garlic scraped fine, and a tablespoonful of chopped parsley, or of parsley and tarragon in equal parts. Place the fish in a china baking dish with 2 oz. of butter broken over them, and a glass of claret, and set in the oven for ten minutes ; then turn the fish, baste them with their liquor, and strew in a handful of fine bread-crumbs ; replace in oven for another ten minutes and serve.

Rub a white baking dish well with garlic, and place therein a layer of skinned tomatoes cut in slices, then a layer of filleted fish (plaice or sole), another layer of tomatoes, and so on till you have used up both them and your fish. Season with pepper and salt, and pour about a wineglassful of salad oil over the fish. Cover with oiled paper, and set in a slow oven to cook very gently for three-quarters of an hour.

## IX.

## SIMPLE ENTRÉES. (I.)

THE weak point of the ordinary English cook is her entrées. She may fry a sole or roast a grouse admirably ; her pastry may be really first-rate ; she may even achieve success in a soufflé or an omelette ; but her idea of an entrée for grand occasions is a sweetbread or a chicken masked with a gluey brown or sticky white sauce, tough truffles or tinned mushrooms elevating the dish, in her estimation, to a triumph unsurpassable by Ude or Carême. These achievements being too costly for everyday use, she considers the meaning of the word "entrée" well fulfilled in the daily bill of fare by the appearance of the drumsticks of yesterday's fowl warmed up in a little thin gravy ; or a leathery hash or a tasteless mince of cold mutton (the accompanying sippets being usually of toast instead of fried bread) ; or a dish of hard balls of coarsely-chopped meat, hot with pepper, strongly flavoured with thyme and onion, and fried a deep brown in a coating of fresh, roughly-crumbled bread-crumbs, proudly described as rissoles ; or, last horror of all, an appalling compound she calls "beef olives"—"Such a nice little entrée, ma'am ; Mrs. —, at my last place, liked them so much ; she always had them when a friend came to dinner."

The truth is, that in most English households an

entrée is synonymous with a réchauffé. Now, though several entrées for everyday use can be made excellently well from cold viands, many more absolutely require fresh meat ; while of those for which cold meat is used, care must be taken that the exhausted juices of the meat are reinforced by good strong stock of some sort, otherwise the dish will be neither nourishing nor appetizing.

Another very important point in the preparation of many entrées is the use of the larding needles. Even when these useful articles are found in a small kitchen—which is less often than might be expected, considering they only cost a few pence—they are too often allowed to rust unheeded ; yet filets, fricandeaus, and sweetbreads are dependent on larding for their full flavour and tenderness ; and one of the first things a mistress should do is to insist on the larding of such things. It is not extravagant ; a slice of fat to be cut into strips for larding can be pared off the top of a piece of breakfast bacon without being much missed, and should prove amply sufficient for an entrée for three or four people. Bacon rinds and trimmings, ham bones, &c., should always be kept, being often quite enough to give the necessary flavour in recipes that require the bottom of the stewpan to be covered with fat bacon ; or in sauces such as tomato, where the addition of ham is almost a necessity.

For the wine needed in the composition of many entrées and sauces, it is not a bad plan to keep a bottle of sound—not fine—port and another of sherry for cooking purposes, and to give out to the cook the requisite quantity as occasion requires. By this means you keep a check on the consumption, and are also able to tell exactly the amount the wine used in cooking costs you, which you cannot well do if it be supplied

from what is drunk at table. Claret and Chablis or Sauterne, however, cannot be so treated, as they will not keep, and they are really the wines best suited to delicate cooking, sherry and port being too heavy and alcoholic for most dishes. Keeping a few half-bottles of light French white wine on hand will often save the extravagant use, or rather misuse, of sherry in dishes where white wine is a necessity; and one glass of Chablis being given to the cook for the required purpose, the two glasses remaining will serve as a fair excuse to a wife for beginning that day's dinner with the luxury of oysters.

To speak first of twice-laid entrées, the very first dish that faces us is that *bête noire*, hashed mutton. Francatelli's recipe for mutton hashed venison fashion is so successful in transforming that tough and tasteless dish into an entrée worthy of the name, that I am fain to give it here, very slightly modified. The mutton should be cut in rather larger and thicker pieces than usual, well floured and seasoned with pepper and salt. The sauce is prepared by chopping a teaspoonful of eschalot very fine, and boiling it for five minutes with a glass of port wine, a dessertspoonful of Oude or Worcester sauce, a teaspoonful of Liebig dissolved in two tablespoonfuls of hot water, and a dessertspoonful of red currant jelly. The meat should simmer very slowly by the side of the fire in this sauce for half an hour—if it boils it is spoilt—and be served in an entrée or vegetable dish, garnished with fried sippets and accompanied by French beans. If it be carefully prepared in this fashion, it will be a very captious critic who objects to hashed mutton.

Hashes and minces are legion, while rissoles, croquettes, and all their tribe need but scant mention. I may, however, quote an excellent simple recipe for a croquette mixture, which is capable of infinite variety.

Soak 4 oz. of bread-crumbs in cold water, and wring dry in a clean cloth. Chop very finely a tablespoonful of onion, and fry in 2 oz. of butter for two minutes. Then add the bread, and stir over the fire till it forms a firm, smooth paste, and ceases to adhere to the side of the saucepan; add 8 oz. of finely-chopped meat, a small dessertspoonful of chopped parsley, pepper, salt, a little grated nutmeg, and a teaspoonful of tarragon vinegar; add, one at a time, two well-beaten eggs, stir till the croquette paste is thoroughly mixed, then set it to cool between two plates. Chopped mushrooms, ham, or any approved addition may be added at pleasure, and though the mixture is not rich, it may be relied on as quite good enough for everyday fare, and as a capital way of using up small scraps.

Richer croquette meat may be made into kromesnies—an admirable way of using up any remnants, however small, of such dainties as sweetbreads, oysters, fowls' livers, mushrooms, &c. Roughly chopped, and mixed with a spoonful or two of white sauce thickened with the yolk of an egg, then rolled, in small portions, in delicate, thinly-cut rashers of bacon, next dipped in frying batter and thrown into boiling fat, they are a real addition to the list of economical entrées. Croquette meat may also be fried in batter as fritters, and forms a very dainty little dish without much trouble. Brain or sweetbread fritters are too well known to need commendation; but a more recondite recipe for special occasions is foie gras fritters, to which "none but themselves can be their parallel."

In conclusion of this first half of my subject, I am fain to say a few words as to the egging and bread-crumbing of croquettes, sweetbreads, cutlets, &c. It is simple folly to imagine that the delicate golden crust which distinguishes such "kickshaws," when they are

the work of a first-rate cook, can be produced when crumbs of fresh bread, rubbed through a coarse wire sieve, are used. The bread-crumbs must be dry, and they must be fine. Another cause of failure is the employment for this of bakers' raspings, which are often coarse, and always too deep in colour, besides tasting burnt. Odd scraps of bread dried (not burnt) in the oven, pounded and finely sifted, are the most satisfactory material. Again, it cannot be too often insisted on that it is useless attempting to fry croquettes, &c. in a shallow frying-pan. If a small, deep stewpan be used, the quantity of fat need not very greatly exceed what would be spread shallowly over the broad surface of the frying-pan. The stewpan method has one disadvantage, that only one or two croquettes can be fried at once, and so it takes rather more time and trouble; but the difference in results well repays the slight amount of extra labour involved. The beaten egg works better, too, if a dessertspoonful of water be mixed with it. And another great point to be remembered is, that the instant the object to be fried is crisp and of a light gold colour, it must be lifted on the skimmer or in the wire basket from the fat, and set to drain in the screen on a sieve, over which is folded some cooking paper to absorb what little grease may remain on the surface of the friture. Half a minute's superfluous frying may turn a triumph into what, if not a failure, is a very modified success.

## X.

## SIMPLE ENTRÉES. (II.)

ONE great secret of a successful entrée lies in the sauce, and its relation to the dishes which precede and follow it.

Now, the good plain cook's theory of sauces is strictly limited; there is a white sauce and there is a brown sauce, and with that her knowledge ends. The great rule that any dish, whether simple or elaborate, should have its own idiosyncrasy, which prevents it being confounded, by connoisseurs at least, even for a moment, with any other somewhat similar dish, is a philosophy absolutely beyond her ken. Stewed fillet of beef, stewed sweetbread, stewed kidneys, and stewed chicken are to her entrées composed of these materials, and she will treat them all so that one result shall strongly resemble the other. What knows she of the subtly varied processes which convert the first into that glory of the Seine et Oise, the filet Béarnaise, with its golden transparent veil of delicious savour; the second into the dainty white morsels garnished with all manner of delightful quelques choses à la Toulouse, or lends to stewed kidneys the crowning grace of the glass of champagne, and renders Poulet à la Marengo a triumph worthy of the conqueror in whose honour it was named? In regard to one of the most useful branches of entrées--

the various kind of cutlets—I can add nothing to the series of recipes for them and their garnishing and sauces which may be found in most good cookery books. I would only suggest the claims on our notice of the double cutlet, cut twice the usual thickness, and so preserving the juiciness and flavour of the meat, and also utter a protest against the egging and bread-crumbing of cutlets in general. Cutlets should be sautéed; by this method they retain their essence, with an added savour and zest the bread-crumbed cutlet never possesses; while a word also should be spoken for the Maintenon cutlet, which of late years seems somewhat to have fallen out of favour among us. It may be remembered that among the thousand and one garnishings of cutlets there are few better than soubise or tomato sauce, green peas, stewed cucumber, or reform chips (as pretty as they are excellent to eat). A tin of Macédoine serves very well when there is a hurry. Then many people are very fond of a purée of chestnuts, while others consider it rather sickly. These are none of them novel suggestions, and, as I have said, reference to the pages of the cookery books will enable my readers to vary them *ad infinitum*.

Entrées of fowl vary from the simply fricasséed remains of yesterday's chicken, to the most elaborate inventions of Ude or Carême. With these latter, however, we have nothing to do; while for the former, composed of the cold remains of fowl, recipes can be found in every cookery book, and whether hash, grill, mince, or fricassée, may all be so cooked and served as to be very nice, or—very much the reverse. Midway between these two extremes come such dishes as fowl à la Marengo, which is, to my mind, the best of all forms of dressed chicken. It is a good plan, when there are but two people to be provided for, to split a

fowl in two, and serve one half à la Marengo, and the other half the next day either spatch-cocked with mushrooms or in any other approved fashion. Fowl à la Marengo cannot be achieved with a bird already cooked, albeit I have known some cooks attempt it ; oil, sherry, tomatoes, and garlic are integral parts of this dish, as is the garnish of eggs fried in oil, with their whites pushed up round the yolks while they are seething in the pan, so that the plump ovals are trimmed, as it were, with the frizzled whites. Well-fried sippets may be added, and the whole dish is one upon which it is worth expending some little pains, so exquisite and peculiar is its flavour when properly prepared.

A cold duck may be utilized as a small salmi, the rich sauce being made from the bones and trimmings, with vegetables, herbs, and sherry reduced almost to a glaze (the same rules apply to the remains of any kind of game). Nothing, however, is better in its way than fillet of duck stewed with olives, the olives of course being previously stoned. The remains of any kind of fowl or game are also admirable as soufflés, having been chopped, pounded, and rubbed through a sieve first. They look very pretty served in ramequin cases. A mixture of mushroom purée with the pounded meat is a great addition. Fricandeaus, steaks, châteaubriands, &c., are more suitable for removes in such miniature dinners as ours, but fillets hold their own as entrées, and so must be dealt with here. A small, well-larded and well-stewed fillet of beef is a dish which should be oftener met with than it is at English tables. It may be served either with olives, jardinière, chestnuts, macaroni, on any other garnish preferred. A very quaint little entrée is a veal fillet cutlet, larded with anchovies, rubbed on both sides with French vinegar, and left for some hours before it is floured and fried in

oil, with the juice of a lemon squeezed over it. Veal cutlets à la Russe will be a novelty to many. Another odd but savoury dish which is not quite correctly classed as an entrée, but may well be served as one, is a risotto or pilaff of rice cooked in the juice of tomatoes (either fresh or tinned), and then fried in butter, with some thinly-sliced onions and some fowls' livers, previously parboiled, and cut in slices half an inch thick. The minute before the pilaff is removed from the fire, some grated Parmesan should be stirred into it. For those who are careless about the scientific rules of dining, several kinds of stuffed vegetables will be found useful to serve before, instead of after, the remove. Tomatoes à la Provençale and mushrooms à la Bordelaise are among these; and so are artichoke bottoms cooked in either of the foregoing fashions, the stuffing in the first case being flavoured with mushroom, garlic, ham, and thyme, and, when used with whole artichokes, entitling them to the epithet à la Barigoule. Any well-made forcemeat will, however, do to stuff vegetables with; but pray be careful not to give a dish a name which does not strictly belong to it in your bill of fare. A too inventive fancy often comes to grief over a menu.

Cucumbers, vegetable marrows, Spanish onions, and aubergines are all good stuffed, the last especially so; and when forcemeat is not at hand, half a pound of sausage-meat mixed with bread-crumbs, chopped eschalot, &c., and the scooped-out interior of the vegetables, is a very good substitute. Artichoke bottoms may be bought in tins, and for an entrée the preserved ones are far cheaper than the fresh ones, and less trouble to prepare, besides being just as good; they are a prime factor in that charming French entrée *Cailles au nid*, forming the nests whereon the boned and

stuffed quails repose, surrounded by several tiny eggs of white forcemeat. Larks may also be used for this dish, and the French decorate each bird with its head and wings, so that, carefully posed, they appear as if alive. This is alien to our English taste, as are the elaborate trophies of the charcutier's skill; and I should recommend that the white eggs be also omitted, as needlessly realistic; but the little stuffed birds, stewed, if possible, with Madeira, and perched each on its nest, amid a lake of rich brown sauce, form a very tempting and dainty dish. The boned larks, stuffed with truffles and foie gras, may be obtained ready dressed at the best Italian warehouses, if you do not feel equal to their preparation at home; while, in case of a sudden addition to your dinner party, it is very handy to have by you a tin of these beautifully prepared little birds, and another of *fonds d'artichauts*, wherewith a high-class entrée can be concocted in half an hour.

Ox palates are cheap, and not difficult to prepare; yet how seldom we meet with them! Another dish of the same gelatinous order is veal tendons; but they need most perfect cookery to render them anything but insipid. In regard to sweetbreads, very few housekeepers seem aware that young bullocks' sweetbreads are nearly, if not quite, equal to calves', and are only charged at a quarter the price of the latter. I believe London butchers very often do not sell them to their customers, but dispose of them to the large restaurants, there to figure boldly at the table d'hôte as *ris de veau*. Properly soaked, parboiled, larded, and stewed, they are practically the same thing as calves' sweetbreads, the only difference being they need somewhat longer stewing.

Vol au vents have disappeared of late years, and are

replaced by the little paper or china cases filled with the ragoûts, which were used formerly to form the garnish of the flaky puff-paste vol au vent cases, which, unless she possessed that rare gift, a hand for pastry, seemed beyond the power of the ordinary cook! Any good cookery book will supply a legion of recipes for varying the contents of these cases, according to the occasion and the season of the year. Francatelli's is especially rich in them. Space fails me to deal more fully with the infinite variety of "side dishes," to use the old-fashioned name, which will suggest themselves to any one who studies the art of arranging a menu day by day. There is nothing which is so stimulating to the imagination and invention in this matter as the intelligent study of the cookery book; the comparison and amalgamation of recipes, followed by a practical trial of their value. *Cuisinez doucement* is the grand maxim to be specially remembered, in regard to entrées in particular, and an important item to impress on your cook is never to use flour in the thickening of a sauce for sweetbread or cutlet or fillet. A little—a *very* little—potato flour, mixed first with a little cold water and added to the hot sauce, will give it sufficient thickness, without impairing its transparency, smoothness, or flavour.

## XI.

## REMOVES.

PLAIN roast joints of the usual order need not detain us long ; but it may be as well to remind all students of the art of dining that, to the cultured palate, roast meat almost inevitably demands the accompaniment of a simple salad, dressed plainly, with oil, vinegar, pepper, salt, and a *fourniture* of daintily-chopped herbs.

Though, to my thinking, a loin of mutton gains immensely by being cut saddle fashion, this must always be a matter of individual taste, and the process cannot be defended on the ground of economy. It is only very young housekeepers who need the suggestion that Welsh mutton is an untold refinement on the English sheep, when a joint of mutton is a part of the evening meal. Ribs of beef should be rolled, both for the sake of convenience in carving and of economy. A good and not general accompaniment thereunto is horseradish butter, when horseradish sauce is not desired.

Venison is seen less often than it might be in many houses, but most people enjoy it, and it is not expensive, if bought with judgment. A neck of vension is an excellent joint, for example ; but if you are fond enough of "deer's flesh" to indulge in it often, get a benevolent country friend, versed in jam-making, to concoct for your benefit some pots of rowan or mountain ash berry

jelly. This has a wild mountain flavour, which goes with venison as nothing else does, and is a great improvement on the traditional red currant jelly. One thing more must be added anent the cooking of venison. It must be enveloped in a crust or luting made of equal parts of flour and bran, mixed with water, and rolled out as thin as possible ; while if the joint be a shoulder, it should previously be overlaid with thin slices of mutton fat, to make up for its entire lack of any fat of its own. Twenty minutes before the joint is cooked the paste should be removed, and the joint browned in the usual manner. French beans must never be forgotten as an accompaniment to venison ; and if you wish for a sauce, you cannot better one made of half a glass of port wine, two tablespoonfuls of red currant or rowan jelly, and a teaspoonful of Liebig or a little glaze boiled for five minutes with a bit of cinnamon and the thinly pared rind of a lemon, and then strained.

A hot ox tongue is a very popular remove served by itself, garnished with peas, Brussels sprouts, or a macédoine of vegetables, with a piquant sauce, instead of as an accompaniment to a roast fowl. Of course it should have been boiled, skinned, and pressed earlier in the day, and to be made hot should be wrapped up in sheets of buttered paper, and warmed in the liquor in which it was boiled. A ham when served hot should be warmed up in the oven in a deep dish, with enough of its own liquor just to touch the edge of the fat, and covered with buttered paper. A capital garnish for a hot ham consists of broiled or stewed tomatoes and Espagnole, or any other rich brown sauce, flavoured with Madeira. The sauce and vegetables should be served separately, so as not to spoil the appearance of the remainder of the ham when cold. This is a really exquisite dish, the invention of a great *chef*, and worthy

of his reputation ; but its creator made an unsparing use of fine old Madeira in the development of his inspiration.

Leg or shoulder of mutton *a la Provençale* as a *pièce de résistance* has the advantage that the troublesome part of the preparation—the boning, stuffing, and braising or stewing—can be done the day before, the joint only needing to be set in the oven half an hour before serving, and glazed with its own gravy very much reduced. This joint is almost as good cold as it is hot, but the stuffing—the basis of which is chopped raw meat and ham—needs an experienced and judicious palate in its concoction, as garlic, shallots, lemon-peel, and mushrooms are dangerous tools for the unwary. Properly flavoured, however, the stuffing should be delicate and delicious, its subtle aroma pervading the meat, which also greatly depends, both for its flavour and appearance, on being first thoroughly fried in olive oil, wherein are mixed pounded shallots, garlic, and thyme, before any water or stock is added to it. When the joint is ready to serve, the gravy remaining in the pan it was glazed in should be mixed with some Provençale sauce. With this joint should be served broiled tomatoes or mushrooms. If you wish to cook the meat Bretonne instead of Provençale fashion, the correct garnish is haricot beans—the small white ones—well soaked and previously boiled. These are tossed for a few minutes in a frying-pan with two tablespoonfuls of oil, together with a clove of garlic, one shallot, and two anchovies previously pounded, and then seasoned, just before serving, with a little chopped parsley, salt, pepper, a sliced gherkin, and the juice of a lemon.

Turkey, capon, or chicken *à la Provençale* owe nothing to the magic garlic, but much to the tomato

sauce which covers them, and to their delicate stuffing of onion, bread, egg, and sliced truffles. A fowl stuffed and roasted in this fashion will be a welcome relief from the eternal roast chicken with bread sauce, of which we are most of us weary. A spatch-cocked chicken, served with fine fresh mushrooms and well-fried potatoes, is one of the distinctive triumphs of English cookery. Boiled chicken is a different thing, if a handful of tarragon be stuffed into it before cooking, and a clear tarragon sauce poured over it when it is done; while a purée of endive may be mentioned as going specially well with a fowl so dressed. All kinds of poultry or game are delicious cooked gipsy fashion—*i. e.* fried in a stewpan with bacon, a little butter, and a clove of garlic, then stewed slowly with two Spanish onions, four tomatoes, and a large glass of sherry (a little sweet red Spanish pepper is an improvement). Another dish of Southern origin is duck stewed whole with olives, than which there are few things better. Duck stewed with lettuce and peas is also excellent, but the bird must be cooked separately from the vegetables.

A wrinkle with regard to duck roasted in the ordinary fashion, with sage and onion stuffing, is to finish it, when it is on the table, by scoring it deeply with the carving-knife, and scattering into the furrows so formed salt and white or black pepper, then pouring over it a glass or two of Burgundy (previously warmed, not heated, so that it may not chill the duck). Baste the bird for a few moments with the wine, and then cover it up, so that the seasoning may soak in for a minute or two. If the process is novel to you, the results will be a revelation.

A fricandeau of veal forms an excellent remove; and a veal cutlet of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. weight, cut four times the

ordinary thickness, makes a neat miniature version thereof for three or four people. It must be larded very thoroughly before stewing, and the ends of the lardons should be crisped with a salamander or red-hot shovel as it is being dished. Frequent basting is a great point in stewing a fricandeau; and if it be served—as by rights it should be—on a “mattress” of sorrel, spinach, or endive, the vegetables, after being passed through a sieve, should be mixed with some of the gravy of the fricandeau, being careful not to make the purée too liquid.

Rump steak with brown oyster sauce is one of our national glories; but if you wish to enlarge on it, try a “Carpet Bag *à la* Colchester,” *i. e.* a steak cut at least two inches thick, split through and filled in between with a layer of raw oysters, lightly seasoned with cayenne and lemon-juice. Sew up the steak, and broil carefully for twenty minutes to half an hour, according to its thickness; it needs no sauce. Rubbing a steak over with salad oil before cooking is the easiest and best method of preserving the juices of the meat and ensuring its appearing at table a deep rich brown outside and red inside, tender and succulent. Lyonnaise potatoes are delicious with a steak so cooked, and so are broiled tomatoes and maccaroni *au jus*; still, the old-fashioned garnish of fried onions, thinly cut, crisp, and of a delicate gold colour, remains incomparable to those who like it. All savoury butters are good served with steak (horseradish butter is perhaps the newest).

The homely but excellent meat pudding is one of those things which it becomes the fashion to revive from time to time (who does not remember how broiled ham and broad beans were *the* fashionable dish some few seasons ago?). Whether fashionable or not, there are

few epicures who will not welcome a grouse pudding, properly made with light thin crust well rolled out; and the daintiest table will be graced by a lark pudding, deftly compounded half of larks and half of Chipolata ragoût, *i. e.* very small round sausages, small quenelles, bits of bacon shaped like marbles, the red parts of carrots also turned into little balls, roasted and peeled chestnuts, button mushrooms, and—if you wish to be extravagant and luxurious—truffles; “all worked up together in one delicious gravy” of brown sauce, and a glass of Madeira or good sherry. For the right composition of a rump-steak pudding six elements are needed—steak, kidneys, larks, mushrooms, oysters, and hard-boiled eggs; the result, with cunning seasoning, should be a triumph.

## XII.

## SALADS AND MAYONNAISES. (I.)

SALAD-MAKING is a gift; to succeed pre-eminently in the art is granted to few; but most people, with study and care, may achieve modest success. It is curious that, though different salad-makers may follow the same formula as regards ingredients, the results will be quite different, and often equally admirable; each person varies the quantities and methods they employ, and so arises the personal individuality of the salad.

To begin with the simple French salad, dressed with vinaigrette and *fourniture* of herbs, a hundred people will mix it in a hundred different ways. One rule, often disregarded by second-rate salad-makers, is that a plain French salad should consist of one kind of vegetable only—lettuce, endive, or Batavian, as you will, but never two of these mixed together, else their delicate and subtle flavours are impaired, if not destroyed. The English olla podrida of lettuce, watercress, mustard and cress, beetroot, and radishes is a different thing altogether, although, when craftily compounded, very appetizing.

A debatable point is whether the salad should be washed and dried, or each leaf simply carefully wiped. The adherents of the latter method declare that wash-

ing ruins the flavour of lettuce; and there may be some truth in this. If you can gather a lettuce fresh from the garden, its heart untainted by worm, slug, or mould, by all means simply wipe the crisp leaves with a clean cloth before using them; but London lettuces often need refreshment, and in this case it is a good thing to stick them up with their stalks in water for an hour or so, and then rinse them lightly but thoroughly with running water. Never let salad lie soaking in a pan of cold water. When rinsed, whisk the lettuce to shake out the wet, break the leaves lightly apart with the fingers—never let a steel knife touch the vegetable if you value your reputation as a salad-maker—tearing each leaf in two, so that the pieces shall not be uncomfortably long, but not any smaller (shred and minced lettuce salad are one of the reproaches of the British housewife), shaking them lightly in a clean cloth till they are freed from any remaining moisture.

Some people dress their salads by placing the lettuce, &c., when washed and dried, in a bowl, and pouring over it in order the components of the dressing or vinaigrette, then sprinkling the *fourniture* or seasoning over it, and finally mixing. I prefer the more methodical, and, I believe, the more artistic, method of first rubbing the bowl well with garlic, then placing therein the chopped herbs, and adding to them the oil, vinegar, &c., mixing well, and leaving the sauce for a little while, so that it may be well impregnated with the flavour and perfume of the herbs before the salad is mixed therein. If half the lettuce be then placed in the bowl and well tossed up, and the second half then added, the whole salad will be quickly and thoroughly mixed, every leaf enjoying its right modicum of sauce and seasoning, which is not always the case when the rougher method is employed.

A good dressing for this kind of salad (a little more elaborate than the ordinary French vinaigrette) consists of two tablespoonfuls of salad oil, one dessertspoonful of tarragon vinegar, one small teaspoonful of anchovy essence (or, better still, of Osborn's paste), half a small teaspoonful of raw mustard, and a pinch of powdered sugar, salt and white pepper being added with discretion. The *fourniture* to be added to this mixture consists of a teaspoonful apiece of chives, tarragon, chervil, burnet or pimperl, and parsley, all chopped as fine as dust (by the way, when will some benevolent manufacturer introduce a herb-chopper on an improved principle for our benefit?) and thoroughly mingled in with the salad. If chives be impossible to procure, shallot or spring onions will serve; but I often wonder, considering the price charged for salad herbs, that economical housekeepers who have no garden do not try the experiment of growing herbs for salads and omelettes in window box or conservatory. Chives are really very pretty with their purple-pink blossoms, and tarragon, chervil, and burnet are all sufficiently valuable in the kitchen to repay a little care in their cultivation.

The mixture above prescribed will be found available for all kinds of salads, except mayonnaises. In fact, many people will prefer this simple dressing to the richer mayonnaise, even for Russian or Italian salads. A tablespoonful of claret or Burgundy is an excellent addition, as it adds great softness, especially to a tomato or potato salad.

The rules for lettuce salads apply equally to the similar salads of endive, Batavian, watercress, mustard and cress, barbe de capucine, &c., all included under the generic term, green salad. These are principally suited to serving with cold meat, poultry, or fish. Salads consisting of cooked vegetables generally now

accompany roast meat ; their variety is infinite, and as few or as many vegetables as you please may enter into them, whilst, in more elaborate guise, they form the foundation of Italian, Russian, Dutch salads, &c.

For tomato salads the fruit is used raw. The ripe, round, smooth, rosy-red tomatoes should be chosen, and a pretty effect may be gained by having a centre of the golden-coloured fruit. The tomatoes should be cut into slices half an inch thick, then freed from the seeds and juice, which should be mixed in with the dressing, for which I have already given the recipe, with the addition of a teaspoonful of fresh lemon thyme, chopped very fine, another of chopped capers, and a fairly liberal addition of powdered sugar. Tomato salad is the only one besides the fruit salads of melon, orange, &c., which needs the addition of more than a pinch of sugar ; but it is wonderful how lavish a spoonful it will stand. The addition of claret is important, and so is the thorough rubbing with garlic of the dish in which it is mixed ; but the great point is to prepare the salad some hours before it is needed, so that the flavours may be thoroughly amalgamated. It looks much better served in a soup plate or shallow glass dish than in a bowl.

Cold boiled salsify, celeriac, Jerusalem artichokes, and cauliflower, and the preserved artichoke bottoms, all make delicious salads, and may all be served with or without beetroot and hard-boiled eggs. Beetroot and raw celery, beetroot and boiled and sliced Spanish onion, carefully boiled small dried white haricot beans, lentils, Brussels sprouts, &c., are also excellent in salads.

## XIII.

## SALADS AND MAYONNAISES. (II.)

ALL salads may be dressed with mayonnaise sauce instead of the vinaigrette, when they may be considered as advanced to the dignity of second-course dishes. Green peas, broad beans, and tomatoes are all exquisite as mayonnaises; but with them the sauce should be coloured green, and mixed with chopped salad herbs, as the plain yellow mayonnaise has a somewhat sickly effect combined with the red of love-apples or the green of peas. A border of plain or tomato aspic is an improvement to such salads, or they may be used as garnishing for more elaborate aspics or chaudfroids; but if served as mayonnaises, let it be in a plain glass dish, set in a silver one, half-filled with crushed ice, in which the glass dish is embedded. This is not much trouble to manage, and is a great improvement to the appearance of any mayonnaise or dressed salad.

Italian and Russian salads are frequently confounded with one another, while plain vegetable salads are often met with under either *alias*. A Russian salad is distinguished principally by the caviare and grated horseradish which are among its components, together with four or five different kinds of cooked vegetables nicely shaped—beetroot, potato, and parsnip are the correct ones—a little game or cold fowl, with ham or

tongue cut in squares. Smoked lax may be added, together with capers, gherkins, &c., and any of the preserved Russian pickles or savouries, which can be obtained at the Russian shop in the Queen's-road. Italian salad is more often served as Russian, and in it fish, flesh, and fowl, chicken, and ham or tongue; anchovies, stoned olives, tunny, capers, and gherkins meet in glorious confusion, with carrots, turnips, potatoes, green peas, French beans, and *flageolets*; all cooked separately and neatly shaped into small dice or other forms with a vegetable-cutter. Beetroot is often directed to be used in these salads, and its brilliant colour and odd sweetness would render it a great addition were it not that it is apt to stain the other vegetables, and so spoil the look of the dish. It is open to you to dress all such salad with vinaigrette or mayonnaise, or tartare sauce, according to taste, but most *réal* epicures will prefer the former and simpler dressing.

A plainer form of salad, which is a capital and economical way of using up any scraps of a cold joint or bird, is to cut the meat up in small dice with an equal quantity of cold potato and beetroot, any cold cooked vegetables which are handy, and then to toss them in a well-seasoned vinaigrette, with one gherkin sliced, a dozen stoned French olives, three anchovies filleted and cut into small pieces, a dessertspoonful of capers, and a couple of sliced hard-boiled eggs. Of course the *fourniture* of herbs must never be forgotten. Cold fish is excellent dressed in the same way, and almost any scraps may be utilized.

Russian or Italian salads look very pretty served in little china cases, or dished pyramid fashion on artichoke bottoms, surrounded by chopped aspic jelly, in a silver dish. The same method may be followed with

German herring salads, for which some epicures profess great affection. If you wish to attempt this delicacy, but are chary of investing in a whole keg of Dutch herrings, you may make a very tolerable attempt at one by using Digby chicks, smoked haddocks, bloaters, or red herrings—the latter for preference—in place of the Dutch fish, adding to them equal quantities of cold potato and chopped sour apple, capers, sliced gherkins, beetroot, and celery, with spring onions cut in half-inch lengths; sauce with oil, vinegar, pepper, and salt, or the vinaigrette already recommended in my first paper.

Two of the most delicately dressed salads are composed chiefly of celery; the first being the renowned American chicken and celery salad. It is an admirable way of using up the half of a cold boiled fowl, freed from bones and skin, cut up into half-inch dice, and mixed with equal quantities of white celery and hard-boiled white of eggs, also cut into half-inch lengths. All these ingredients should be mixed with some thick rich mayonnaise sauce; but as the point of this dish is its creamy union of the golden sauce with the whiteness of fowl, celery, and eggs, no herbs must be added, except a spice of finely-chopped eschalot; neither does it need an aspic border. If garnish be desired, a wreath of thinly-sliced cucumber or lemon may be laid round its base, and it should be served in a pyramid in a glass dish, set in ice, as before directed. The vivid red of fresh barberries will daintily emphasize the cool tints of the dish, if set here and there amid the garnish.

The other celery salad is the famous *salade à la Rachel*, dedicated by its inventor to the great actress. In this also the celery is mixed with the hard-boiled white of egg, three eggs being the proportion to two heads of celery; these are tossed up in a tartare sauce, *i. e.* mayonnaise, flavoured with three anchovies, capers,

tarragon, burnet, chives, and French mustard, which should be all pounded together and rubbed through a sieve before being added to the sauce (the herbs being first parboiled). The salad should then be piled high in its glass dish, and over it should be strewn, first the hard-boiled yolks of the eggs rubbed through a sieve, and then some finely-chopped truffles. It should be garnished round with thin slices of Wurtemberg sausage, and with sliced truffles, if you wish to be extravagant.

A simple potato salad or mayonnaise is converted, by the addition of a few sliced truffles, into a dish worthy the Olympians themselves, but for the detailed recipe of *salade à la Japonaise*, I must refer my readers to Dumas' "Francillon."

Lobster, crab, and salmon mayonnaises, together with those of chicken and game, need no description. I may say, however, that they look more novel if served in small cases, and the same remark applies to the celery mayonnaise, already described; but they certainly are not as nice to eat, as the salad loses its freshness sooner, and all the component parts have to be too finely minced to suit the character of the dish. A green salad with stuffed eggs makes a good and simple second-course dish for a plain dinner.

One word anent fruit salads, so often now served with meat, orange salad lending a charm to wild duck, as does melon to roast lamb and pineapple to *suprême* of chicken.

The oranges for a salad should be sliced, the thin inside skin cut away with a sharp knife, and the fruit should then be dressed with a tablespoonful of oil, ditto of brandy, a little powdered sugar, and some chopped tarragon; rum is an improvement on the brandy, or would be so, were it not that it does not as thoroughly

disguise the taste of the oil, and so may by some people be regarded as making the salad rather sickly. With melon or pineapple no oil is needed ; they should be cut into convenient pieces, and a squeeze of lemon-juice and sprinkling of powdered sugar is all they require. Chopped tarragon and chervil may be added or not, according to taste.

Herring, sardine, and anchovy salads are all more suited to serve as hors d'œuvres than as second-course dishes, but in their right place they are excellent ; and so is a salad of pimentos (the large Spanish peppers) dressed with olives, Norwegian anchovies, and capers, and seasoned with vinaigrette.

## XIV.

## DRESSED VEGETABLES.

WE have not in England readily accepted dressed vegetables as one of our savoury entremets, and there are many households where such never make an appearance, both their excellence and economy being ignored. In countries where maigre dinners are part of the general *régime*, and the dressed vegetables form at least once a week in most homes the *pièce de résistance*, such dishes have assumed an importance they could never claim in this country.

Of the dressed vegetables which are best plainly boiled and served on toast, with a good sauce or oiled butter, asparagus and artichokes of course rank first. No device of modern cookery can improve on asperges en branches, if only they be fresh and tender; and artichokes also are scarcely benefited by elaborate cooking. But the melted or oiled butter must be faultless, and slightly dashed with lemon-juice, while a flask of oil should be handed for the benefit of those who prefer it to butter. In summer, artichokes or asparagus iced (not frozen, for that makes them tough) so that they are deliciously cold, and served with mayonnaise sauce, make a pleasant variety.

These vegetables can later be replaced by salsify, celeriac, beetroot, and Jerusalem artichokes, which are

all good—boiled, drained, cut into conveniently small pieces, and tossed up in melted butter, béchamel, Italian or Dutch sauce, and served on toast. They may also be served au gratin, a fashion usually reserved for cauliflower; the first-mentioned vegetables being more distinct in flavour than cauliflower, Parmesan cheese should be omitted in their case; while with salsify a little anchovy may be added to heighten the oyster flavour. Tomatoes, Brussels sprouts, new potatoes, &c., are also excellent au gratin with cheese, and may be prepared early in the day. The best dishes for vegetables or maccaroni au gratin are the oval French ones of white fire-proof china, which are handy and pretty, and slip easily into a silver *entrée* dish.

Simply stuffed vegetables may be prepared with a light forcemeat of bread-crumbs, butter, chopped herbs, shallot, and seasoning, mixed with the scooped-out interior of the vegetable itself, seeds, juice, and all; a little chopped ham or mushrooms being often a great addition. Aubergines, cucumbers, tomatoes, Spanish onions, &c., make pretty dishes so treated. Potatoes are very good baked in their skins, cut in halves, and emptied of their contents, which should be well mashed with plenty of butter, raw egg, grated Parmesan, chopped parsley and eschalot, nutmeg, pepper, and salt, and—if handy—a little cold boiled rice. The half skins should be refilled with the mixture, put in the oven for ten minutes, and served in a napkin in a wooden potato bowl.

It would be useless to attempt to enumerate the thousand ways of dressing potatoes, but potatoes à la Duchesse and à la Lyonnaise are good enough to serve as second-course dishes. For Lyonnaise they should be previously boiled and not too floury; then cut in quarter-inch slices and fried in salad oil, with sliced

onions or minced shallot, chopped parsley and chervil, and a squeeze of lemon-juice. Spanish onions are good parboiled, the core taken out and its place filled up with butter and sugar, then braised in a rich gravy. The common or garden onion also is delicious, parboiled and stewed in red wine, to which thyme, parsley, and a bit of glaze have been added; this sauce should be strained half an hour before serving, thickened with butter, kneaded with a little flour, and enriched with some capers and chopped anchovies. The onions should be dressed high in the middle of a coronet of delicately fried triangular croûtons, stuck upright on their bases by the aid of a little white of egg. All braised vegetables or purées look well thus treated.

Lettuce, celery, cucumber, tomatoes, sea-kale, leeks, dandelion, and endive are all excellent well braised and served with a brown sauce. For purées, spinach, of course, is *facile princeps*, and after it, perhaps, comes endive; poached eggs and spinach are a national dish, but how many have ever tried a savoury omelette in lieu of the eggs? A vegetable soufflé is a very dainty form of the purée, and may be made of many vegetables. It should be prepared in the same way as an ordinary soufflé, with the addition of as much potato flour as will suffice to give the vegetable purée the needed stiffness. Spinach makes an exquisite soufflé, so do onions, prepared as for soubise sauce; green peas seem almost too good in themselves to be submitted to such treatment, but if not very young may be turned with advantage into this refined form of "pease-pudding hot." A vegetable soufflé, on which its inventor prides herself, is one of tomato mixed with Parmesan—a great improvement on the ordinary cheese soufflé. Broad beans should also make an admir-

able soufflé, and salsify likewise cooks well in this manner.

French beans make a singular piquant dish boiled with mint, and dressed with butter, powdered sugar, a squeeze of lemon, and a somewhat plentiful seasoning of white pepper. The mint works a magical effect on the flavour. They should be served in a coronet of croûtons.

Vegetable fritters made of salsify, beetroot, celeriac, fonds d'artichauts, and other vegetables of the same kind are also very good, the vegetables being boiled, cut in slices, seasoned, dipped in batter, and fried. Spinach makes delicious fritters, but it must be made into a purée first, and mixed with the batter to form part of it, then fried in spoonfuls. Aiguebelle fritters are made in the same manner, with potato and Parmesan. The fashion of boiling spinach in water cannot be enough condemned, rendering it, as it does, pulpy and tasteless. When washed and picked, spinach should be put in a well-buttered stewpan without any water besides what clings to the leaves, set by the side of a slow fire, and stirred now and then to prevent its burning. When quite tender it is ready to be rubbed through a sieve, preparatory to being dressed in whatever way is preferred, but butter must never be stinted in its preparation.

Green peas are best of all, like asparagus, in the beauty of their unadorned simplicity; but they are very good stewed with lettuce, without any water, in a buttered stewpan, the peas being previously well rubbed with fresh butter. They should be placed on the lettuce, the rough outer leaves thereof serving as a covering for the whole. These last should be thrown away when cooked, and the peas served on their mattress of lettuce. They will be found delicious as

regards flavour, but in colour leave something to be desired.

Yams and sweet potatoes are at present a fancy with some people, though those who have been used to them in the tropics, as a rule, dislike them, finding them sickly and insipid.

Mushrooms are really too good to be stuffed or otherwise diverted from their native simplicity; but if you wish to taste them in true perfection, choose those of a good size, of a globular shape, with light-coloured gills—the very large, flat, dark flaps are best simply sauté with butter—place these in a small buttered fire-proof dish, and put a large lump of Devonshire cream in the centre of each mushroom, pour some more cream round them, season slightly with pepper and salt, cover the dish closely with another on the top, and set in the oven for ten minutes; a squeeze of lemon may be added before serving, and buttered toast or fried croûtons served with them. Small button mushrooms are best stewed in a saucepan, either with gravy or butter, and a little milk; they should be thickened slightly with flour, and seasoned with lemon-juice, pepper, and salt.

Morels are best stewed in a rich, wine gravy. They may be served in patty cases or croustades: and puff-balls of the right sort and gathered young (the white *Lycoperdon giganteum* is the best) may be cooked in the same way, though they are very good cut in slices and sautéd. English truffles are a dainty which should be sought for during the period they are in season, and may then often be had at a moderate price at Covent Garden. They may be simply cooked in butter and served in a napkin, or stewed with wine—sherry or Madeira. Potato croquettes are delicious with a truffle craftily concealed in each of them.

## XV.

## CURRIES.

THERE is no more economical or enticing dish than a good curry, but it is profanation of the name to apply it to the tasteless, saffron-hued messes which so often masquerade under this title. A true curry-lover has scant patience with ordinary devices for serving it as a made dish ; and if he puts up with the rice being ranged round the curry, instead of served separately in a light snowy mass, he will certainly wax indignant at the present fashion of pressing the rice into dariole moulds, and serving it in little moulds round the curry.

It is not sufficiently realized among us that a curry is entirely out of place when served as an entrée before the remove, as it blunts the palate for the more delicate flavours of flesh or fowl ; whereas, if served after joint, or remove, or sorbet, it acts as a pick-me-up without hindering the enjoyment of sweets or savoury. A curry is never so acceptable, or so reviving, as in very hot weather, and it is invaluable as an element of contrast in a dinner, especially if it be preceded by a sorbet, or followed by an iced sweet, or by stewed fruit and cream, or custard, as is the custom in tropical countries.

The true Oriental curry is not the same thing as our imitations, and no loyal obedience to ordinary

cookery book recipes will enable one to produce even a poor likeness of the staple dish of Hindostan. In the first place it is not possible here to pluck the herbs and spices from the tree and shrub, and to pound them freshly as required for the curry; yet on this depends much of the incomparable flavour and subtlety of an Indian curry. This, however, is but one of the reasons of failure, which are many. An English cookery book tells you to fry your onions brown; the mild Hindoo *stews* his slowly for hours together into a savoury pulp with powder and paste and strange fruits and vegetables equally odd in appearance and flavour. Our cook pins her faith on sour apples, which but badly represent the luscious aubergine or gourd which abroad gives substance and richness to the sauce. Again, she dilutes her curry with watery stock, then thickens it with flour; finally simmers or boils a few scraps of meat or chicken in the sauce for half an hour, and serves the mess up as an Indian curry.

A curry should vary with the season as regards the vegetables or fruit to be added. Besides the onions, there should always be some gourd to give the sauce a glutinous richness, such as cucumber, marrow, or, best of all, aubergine; with some sharp fruit, such as green gooseberries, tomato, apple, or even rhubarb, to impart the needful piquancy. All or any of these may be used, but care should be taken not to make the curry too acid.

A curry (to cook properly) should be set on to stew some eight hours before it is needed; indeed, it is better in every way prepared the previous day. Having sliced six large onions and half a small cucumber, put these, with two tomatoes or one apple, or a handful of green gooseberries, into a stewpan, with 2 oz. of butter, good dripping, or salad oil, one dessertspoonful of

curry powder, another of curry paste, two cloves of garlic, a little fresh fennel, bay leaf, and ground ginger and cinnamon. Simmer these very slowly by the side of the fire for three or four hours, then add a teacupful of freshly-grated cocoanut, a small tablespoonful of tamarinds, a few drops of tarragon vinegar or lemon-juice, and a lump of white sugar. This curry needs really no more moisture or thickening, but if the first be desired, cocoanut milk should be used, if possible, or, if there be none, ordinary milk—never stock or water; while for thickening, a little rice boiled to a pulp is best. The curry sauce may be rubbed through a sieve or not, as thought best (I myself prefer it left as it is), and two hours before serving, the meat, fish, or vegetables should be added, and the whole allowed to simmer very slowly by the side of the fire till it is needed. If it be an egg curry, half an hour will be long enough to allow the eggs to cook in the sauce. The remains of such a curry will make an excellent mulligatawny soup the next day, if added to some stock, and slightly thickened with ground rice.

The best of all curries is prawn, and close on that comes crab or lobster, either of which is delicious, when prepared as a dry curry, by leaving the fish to dry and flake in the sauce by the side of the fire till all moisture is consumed, and it looks like a heap of fine light-brown filaments. This is not a dish, however, which can be ordered at a minute's notice, as it takes forty-eight hours to prepare. Shrimp curry is a very fair substitute for the more costly prawn, and scallops also make an excellent curry, but should be cut up previously into two or three pieces each, as otherwise they are apt to be tough. Fish curries, not of shell fish, do not rank high as a rule, but eels make a very good and rich dish, properly prepared.

All rich, gelatinous, and somewhat fat meats are the best for curry ; calf's head, breast of mutton, and breast of veal being excellent ; while ox palates are delicious. Ox-tail curries well, and so do sweetbreads. Coarsely-minced chicken or rabbit makes a very delicate curry. Pork and mutton and veal curry better than beef, which is apt to become tough and stringy instead of tender and succulent. The addition of raisins, almonds, pickled mangoes to a curry must be a matter of taste (the best Indian curries I have known have been innocent of them), but small green chillies are an immense improvement.

Bombay ducks are a frequent addition to a curry in England, but one seldom meets with the fresh tomato chutney, which is so delicious and piquant an accompaniment. It is easily made, however, by pounding a fresh ripe tomato in a mortar with finely-chopped spring onions, chopped green chillies, a clove of garlic, and two Bombay ducks (sardine or bloater will serve instead), together with a little salad oil and a few drops of lime-juice or tarragon vinegar. This is the inevitable concomitant of a tropical curry in an island where French science has blended with Eastern inspiration as regards culinary art to produce a perfect result. Another simple and excellent "fixing" is a lightly-boiled egg for each person, served with curry, and the contents of the former scooped out and mixed with the curry after it is helped. I may add that an egg so treated is very good also with rump steak.

Iced curries may well be recommended as among the daintiest of second-course dishes. They may be made of shrimps, prawns, crab, or lobster, or any scraps of salmon or sole, or of chicken, sweetbread, calves' brains, &c. ; the soft roes of mackerel or fresh herrings also are delicious so treated. These ingredients are not really

curried, but cut into small dice and mixed with some rich and thick tartar or mayonnaise sauce, with which has been blended some thoroughly good curry powder. As to the freezing, it may be accomplished without an ice machine, by filling two cocoa tins, with lids, one with the curry and the other with nicely boiled rice, each grain separate; then burying the tins for two hours in a mixture of ice, saltpetre, and salt. When they are needed, half fill a number of little white china soufflé dishes with the curry, filling up with the rice. Serve in a silver dish, embedded in crushed ice.

Curried rice is more suitable as a breakfast dish or a garnish for cutlets than for serving by itself at dinner; but if it be garnished with fowls' livers, or scraps of ham or tongue, or small balls of liver forcemeat, it may make its appearance now and again at the latter meal. Curried vegetables are among the best of their tribe, and are better when two or three different sorts are mixed together. Celery, sea-kale, broad beans, French beans, peas, cauliflower, young carrots, celeriac, beetroot, Jerusalem artichokes, and, last but not least, mushrooms, are among the best for this purpose. They should, of course, be previously cooked before being stewed in the curry sauce.

Another excellent accompaniment of curry, with which I have only lately become acquainted, is cucumber shredded into very thin fine strips (as vegetables are prepared for Julienne soup, only thinner), well salted so as to drain out the water, and then dressed with oil and a little tarragon vinegar, chopped green chillies, and three anchovies, washed, boned, and chopped up small.

## XVI.

## SWEETS.

IT would seem from a study of present day menus, that the taste for sweet things is declining. One sugared entremets is usually considered enough, even at an elaborate dinner. The sorbet, however, and the ices, must be counted as filling the place of the succession of creams and jellies of former days.

There has been no more welcome and refreshing innovation than that of the sorbet served between the remove and the game ; and care should be taken that it has sufficient sharpness to really refresh and stimulate the palate. Roman punch, delicious as it is, fails in this requirement, a lemon sorbet or a claret granito being less cloying and more piquant. Some few of the American drinks, iced to the right point, make admirable and original sorbets.

Hot sweets are far less popular now than cold ones ; but as I am writing to meet the requirements of small families and their every-day needs, I venture to remind my readers of various homely and excellent puddings, such as Blackcap, Bakewell, College, roley-poley, fruit, and Christmas plum pudding, or the old-fashioned lemon pudding, baked in a pie-dish, with a thin rim of crust, seldom seen now, and delicious with its fascinating combination of lemon rind and juice, cream, eggs,

nutmeg, and bruised ratafias ; it is good either hot or cold, but best cold, while some chopped pistachios smarten up its appearance wonderfully. A ginger pudding made with a sufficiency of finely-chopped preserved ginger is also an excellent steamed pudding, and, as with cabinet pudding, its remains are very good sliced and fried.

Fruit crusts are pretty little hot sweets ; so are slices of French roll dipped in a mixture of egg, milk, and Maraschino, and fried in butter, some hot apricot or peach jam, mixed with the Maraschino, being poured over them before serving. Any liqueur may be used, but Maraschino and Kirsch are the best for cooking purposes.

Sweet omelettes will always be popular. An omelette soufflé or a jam omelette, well made, is always liked, especially if the jam be apricot, mixed with a dash of Maraschino. A rum or kirsch omelette should have some of the spirit mixed with the eggs, besides that which is set alight over it before it is brought to table. Soufflés are akin to omelettes, but have the advantage of being much easier to make. Any cook, who is willing, can learn to make a perfect soufflé. The white china soufflé dishes are convenient, and less heavy than the old-fashioned plated ones. Chestnut-flour makes a delicious soufflé, and is improved by a layer of lemon or orange marmalade at the bottom of the dish ; rice and tapioca soufflés are idealized forms of puddings we most of us did *not* love in our infancy ; and fruit soufflés, made of the fruit itself pulped through a sieve, are delicious. Of course, they need as much potato flour, eggs, butter, &c. as the ordinary soufflés, only the milk or water is omitted. Chocolate and coffee soufflés are the best perhaps of their kind ; and the chocolate powders, such as cocoatina, are a

great saving of time and trouble in the concoction of any chocolate sweets; but when they are used vanilla must always be added.

Baked chocolate or coffee custards are simple and economical. The little castle puddings are always nice, especially when flavoured with lemon, steamed, and served with wine sauce, and when baked and rolled in a kirsch syrup they are better than any *baba* or *savarin*.

Fruit tarts should always be served cold; and the cream handed with them is better whipped, in the opinion of many people. To dwell on creams of various kinds would take too long, but I may mention among the less frequent forms of this dainty, *crème brûlée*, and *riz l'impératrice*, tempered with apricot jam, custard, vanilla, &c., besides whipped cream. One of the nicest and most quickly-prepared sweets is cream, whipped stiffly, sweetened, flavoured with vanilla and cognac, or lemon, and mixed with brown bread-crumbs. It should be served piled high in an old china bowl, and strewn with more crumbs and glacé cherries. If you like a compote of chestnuts, pile some stiffly-whipped plain cream in a dish, and cover it with the chestnuts rubbed through a coarse sieve, then place round it a wreath of slices of orange compote, flavoured with Maraschino, or bananas dressed with rum. Coffee-mousse, gooseberry fool, or egg nogg (made of whipped cream, raw yolk of egg, powdered sugar, sherry, lemon-juice, and a dash of rum), and similar semi-liquid sweets look very pretty served in tea or coffee cups and saucers of old china. You may have the saucers placed round, and the cups handed on the large cake or bread-and-butter plates of an old-fashioned service in lieu of a tray. This looks quainter than custard glasses, which are old-fashioned.

A delicious accompaniment to any stewed fruit is rice or tapioca cooked in milk, with sugar and vanilla, and mixed, when well-nigh cold, with whipped cream, then piled rock-like in a glass dish.

The little cornets of chopped almond paste, filled with whipped cream, are a very dainty sweet, smarter and newer than meringues, and easy to make. (Meringue cases are, however, an excellent way of using up superfluous whites of eggs, and will keep some little time in a tin.) Little nougat shapes, moulded in dariole cases, need some dexterity of touch, and no one should be disheartened by one or two failures in attempting them. They may be filled with whipped cream, ices, coffee-mousse, or even fruit salad, or well-frozen gooseberry fool.

Fruit fools need no description ; but a note may be made that the fruit for strawberry or raspberry fool should not be cooked, and should be mixed with plain whipped cream, whereas gooseberry or rhubarb fool is just as good made with custard. A large china bowl is best to serve them in, and sponge cakes are the fit accompaniment. Junket is one of the coolest and daintiest of summer dishes, but it must have a liberal mask of Devonshire cream.

Cakes of various kinds count among the most popular sweets at present, and are of all varieties. Those which are served hot, such as babas and savarins, should always be soaked in a warm, rich syrup, redolent of orange or lemon, kirsch or rum. Flavoured and coloured icings are greatly in fashion now, and so are sweet butters, such as chocolate, coffee, pistachio, &c., both icings and butters being frequently mixed with spirits or liqueurs ; while the cakes themselves are often simply the old-fashioned tipsy cake under other names, as far as a liberal steeping in wine and liqueurs

justified the title. Icing should be used when the cake to be decorated is largely compounded of butter, while the flavoured butters are more suitable when the cake is of sponge. A good variety of the latter kind is a tall sponge cake—it must be very fresh, and home-made, if possible—cut horizontally into slices, each of which must be spread thickly with coffee or pistachio-green butter (flavoured with Chartreuse). When the slices are once more piled on the top of each other, the cake is masked with more of the same mixture. The coffee cake should be decorated with preserved cherries and almonds chopped and baked of a light fawn colour; the green cake with chopped pistachio, angelica, and, if handy, preserved orange flower petals.

A delicious almond sweet is achieved by making a sponge cake, using no flour at all, but in lieu thereof  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb. of sweet almonds, and about six bitter ones blanched, chopped, pounded, and rubbed through a sieve (ground almonds will not do). This cake should be baked in a plain round tin, and, when cold, be served either covered with whipped cream, or soaked with rum or a mixture of sherry and brandy, and masked with any sweet butter preferred. This is a cold sweet of a really high order, and is easy, though somewhat tedious, to accomplish. Certain dainty little cakes, called love's wells, may be made by stamping out rounds of pound cake about an inch and a half thick, with a two-inch circular cutter, and cutting out their interior with another, a size smaller, so that the inside thereof may be neatly emptied to within half an inch of the bottom, leaving small round hollow cases, which should be refilled with whipped cream, and covered with a spoonful of apricot jam. So prepared, the cakes should be masked with dull icing, prepared by just melting (not boiling)  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. icing sugar, with

rather more than a tablespoonful of rum and a squeeze of lemon-juice. When iced, the cakes can be decorated with glacé fruits or chopped pistachios as preferred. These are charming little cakes, and as good to eat as they are pretty to look at.

Among hot sweets may be mentioned fruit fritters, beignets soufflés, pancakes, &c., but only the first need special mention. Bananas make incomparable fritters; slices of oranges are good, and so are halved greengages. Tinned peaches, apricots, or pineapple serve well; but whatever fruit is used should be soaked in a little rum, Maraschino, or kirsch, and sugar, before being dipped in the batter, which should also be flavoured with the liqueur.

Whatever you do, let your sweets be real of their kind, your custard made with eggs and milk, guiltless of corn-flour or custard powder; your whipped cream genuine, not eked out with white of egg; and your jelly made from calves' feet, not gelatine; while, if you like that insipid dish blanc-mange, eat it under that name, and not under the *alias* of Italian cream, owing to the addition of a handful of dried fruits.

## XVII.

## SAVOURIES.

MANY dishes, often inserted under the head of savouries in cookery books, are unsuited to the end of the dinner, and if wished for had better be served before the sweets instead of after them. Among these are savoury omelettes, risottos, vegetables with cheese, and macaroni, unless indeed it be seasoned very highly, and served in very small portions. Though the French do not admit the savoury omelette as belonging to the dinner, considering it, along with all other varieties of dressed eggs, as more suitable to breakfast, we may gladly avail ourselves of the valuable aid given us by eggs in enabling us to vary our menu. But all these somewhat substantial dishes should precede the sweets. Omelettes can be garnished with almost anything that is handy in the way of vegetable, or scraps of chicken, ham, tongue, sweetbread, &c.; and if any good sauce, such as Italian, soubise, or tomato, is at hand, it may be poured round the omelette with advantage. Omelettes with stewed kidneys or oysters, green peas or asparagus points, mushrooms, oysters, crabs, or lobsters, are all excellent; and crab omelette may be especially recommended. Buttered eggs can be garnished in the same fashion, a spoonful or two of any dainty left over from some other meal being sufficient to exalt them into a

very acceptable item of the second course, while eggs, "scrambled" with tomatoes are delicious. If there is nothing ready which can be mixed with buttered eggs, they should be served on an anchovy toast, or one spread with either potted meat or fish, or some of the old-fashioned smoked Hamburg beef grated. Time would fail to mention but a few of the other ways of doing eggs; "à la cocotte," baked in little china cases with butter; "à l'Aurore," or "au gratin," with cheese; "à la maître d'hôtel," hard boiled, cut in slices, and heated in a very rich maître d'hôtel sauce, made from béchamel—all these are good, and the addition of truffles makes the last named a special dainty. Plovers' eggs also should, I think, come before the sweets, however they are served.

Dressed crabs and iced savoury soufflés should perhaps be included under the head of mayonnaises, but may be mentioned here as very excellent cold second-course dishes. No one can prepare a dressed crab so well as the fishmonger, and it is therefore better to order it from him ready to serve. Iced soufflés are easy to make and delicious to taste. Cold fish, flesh, or fowl, torn lightly into small shreds, should be mixed with some well-seasoned mayonnaise sauce. A layer of this mixture should be spread at the bottom of a china soufflé dish, and covered with some aspic jelly, whipped into a stiff froth; then another layer of the mixture, followed by more jelly, till the mould is full. It should be buried in ice for two hours, and served with some chopped aspic jelly covering the top. Salmon or crab is excellent dressed in this way.

Cheese fondus, soufflés, ramequins, &c. are capital savouries, and a careful housekeeper will see that all trimmings of paste left over in pie or tart making are made into cheese sticks or such trifles.

To a very simple class of savouries belong those which can be handed round in a pot, accompanied by dry toast and fresh butter ; but under this head comes the king of all dainties, the matchless foie gras. After this comes caviare, and then the tribe of potted meats, all of which, when home-made, may be excellent, and are also an economical way of using up scraps of ham, tongue, salmon, or game. Bloater paste from the shops is usually abominable ; but bloater paste made at home, with the soft roes added, and a sufficiency of fresh butter, is a delicacy no epicure will despise. Haddocks, kippers, smoked salmon, or mackerel, &c., are equally good treated in the same way, the pastes made therefrom not only being good served plainly, but available for the concoction of tiny savoury raviolis or soufflés, and making a capital savoury spread thickly on a hot toasted and well-buttered crumpet.

Crumpets so toasted and spread with caviare are the nearest approach to which we can attain to the Russian *blini au caviare*, unless we can procure the thinner and more delicate cakes, known in the north by the name of pikelets, but not generally obtainable from a London baker. They are far superior to crumpets for this purpose. Smoked cods' roes are also very good served as above. The soft roes of bloaters are better served on toast, and so are devilled sardines or filets of bloaters or kippers. Devilled anchovies, smoked salmon, or tunny, on the contrary, are best on devilled biscuits, well soaked in oil before being grilled. All this class of savouries must be served very hot.

Savoury toasts are of two kinds—hot and cold, anchovy, marrow, and Bombay toasts ranking highest among the former class. The first and second of these need no description, though a passing remark may be made that every true gourmet prefers his marrow toast

prepared at the table. If the bones are emptied in the kitchen the marrow grows cold in an instant, and marrow croustades or patties are too rich for the majority of us. Bombay toast is a relish, also, which may be concocted before the eyes of the guests, with the aid of a hot-water plate filled with boiling water, on which are beaten together two ounces of fresh butter, melted, two raw yolks of eggs, two tablespoonfuls of anchovy essence (or better, of Osborn's paste), a tablespoonful of sherry or champagne, and a saltspoonful of cayenne. Some freshly-made squares of dry toast should be well soaked in this mixture, and handed round quickly. This is a great Indian luxury, being the favourite refreshment there after a long evening spent at cards, when "pick-me-ups" appear a necessity of existence.

Marrow bones and Welsh rabbits seem really our two national savouries, and the second can be very daintily concocted with small circular croûtons of fried bread, thinly spread with mustard, and heaped with small pieces of Cheddar or double Gloucester; then placed in a brisk oven for about five minutes and served directly.

Cold savoury toasts may be made with any of the potted meats or fishes already mentioned, or with cod or tunny, or any of the savoury butters, such as epicurean, ravigotte, anchovy, watercress, or almond butter, and may be further garnished with stuffed or chopped olives, hard-boiled eggs, fillets of anchovies, &c., and varied *ad infinitum*. Only a little ingenuity is required to create a fresh savoury for every day in the year. Savoury butters may also be served in small balls or rolls, with dry biscuits, the best kind being the delicate little salted ones recently introduced. A novel mixture, which may be ranked among such butters, and is very good, is Greek sauce, made by pounding

blanched almonds in a mortar well rubbed with garlic, together with caviare or anchovy paste, pepper, salt, lemon-juice, and enough oil to make a thick paste. A somewhat similar mixture is made by using caviare pounded with a little crumb of French roll, soaked in milk and pressed dry, a squeeze of lemon, and sufficient oil to make it into a paste. Either of these mixtures make quaint and dainty savoury sandwiches.

Among "Hors d'œuvres" were mentioned several trifles suitable for savouries, so no more need be said now on this head beyond noting stuffed rolls filled with any dainty cold salpicon, mixed with mayonnaise; ramequin cases filled with such mixtures, which are very pretty if not very individual savouries; while tiny soufflés of game purées are more original. Angels on horseback are an excellent finish to a dinner; but care should be taken that the bacon used is cut very thin and is entirely devoid of any suspicion of lean, otherwise the appearance is marred. Devilled or roasted oysters, served in the deep shell, are a delicious epilogue to a dinner, even as raw ones are the best possible prologue.

Brillat Savarin's remark that a dinner without cheese is like a pretty woman with one eye, is often ignored nowadays, but there never was a time when it was so easy to ring the changes on various kinds; and with many people it still remains a feature of the dinner. Any one who is catholic in his appreciation of cheese, can alternate Cheddar or Stilton with Roquefort, or Gorgonzola with grated Parmesan, English cream cheese, Mont d'Or or Strachino, Swiss bondons, Camembert, the odd little herb-flavoured cheeses, hailing, I believe, from Norway, the rich and piquant Brie or Malakoff, or that singularly delicate and delicious cheese coming from "Port de Salut" or Providence. Any remains of

a green salad may reappear with the cheese, and water-cress butter is an excellent accompaniment therewith. Pulled bread, water biscuits, Bath Olivers, oat cake, and American crackers, or Dutch rusks, should be served alternately with the cheese.

## XVIII.

## DRINKS, DESSERT, ETC.

AS to the choice and serving of wines, I may refer my reader to the excellent paper on that subject by Mr. Ernest Hart in the Christmas number of *The Queen* for 1889 ; every one who has had experience of house-keeping knows that in entertaining, on however modest a scale, it is the wine which is the serious expense. A good deal of this extra outlay arises from our custom of mixing our wines. The serving Chablis with oysters, sherry with soup, claret, champagne, &c. through dinner ; port or old ale with cheese, and a choice of rarer wines afterwards, is simply wasteful excess, blunting the palate and harming the digestion, besides being one of the reasons why people of moderate means rightfully dread the cost of dinner-giving.

The craze for champagne is another source of expense. A wine merchant of great judgment told me a little time ago that, while his firm was unable to get sufficient of a certain brand of champagne to meet their customers' demands at 84s. the dozen wholesale, they had very few clients willing to give 30s. a dozen for claret. Fair port, good sherry, and admirable hock, claret, or Burgundy, can be purchased for the price of inferior champagne ; but the last is the fashion, and

so we sacrifice our better instincts and follow our neighbours' lead in the matter,

If you cannot afford wine, offer your guests good beer or stout, whisky and aerated water, or whatever you are accustomed to drink yourselves ; but, if you give wine, let it be good of its kind, and chosen with care and discretion. Of course, if it is possible to lay down a modest stock of wine, and keep it replenished judiciously, it is an advantageous and economical plan. But to do this satisfactorily the vintage of each year must be studied, remembering that in a good year an inferior class of wine will often surpass a superior one of a poorer vintage. For sherry, an octave cask will be found economical, as no more than is wanted at once need be drawn off.

So many wines are now introduced which a few years ago were strangers to the English market, at all events under their own names, that the buyer's judgment is often at fault. Australian wines very often possess a peculiar roughness. In spite of Mrs. Browning's praise of "wine of Cyprus," the Greek wines, when introduced among us, did not take the English taste, and the value of Italian wines is a moot point with us to this day ; some judges extolling *Asti Spumante* as delicious, others condemning it entirely. Chianti has its votaries, and when good is a very pleasant wine. Algerian wines also are highly praised, and I once tasted some still Moselle from there, which was fuller of the delicate fragrance of the Muscat grape than any wine of the kind I had before met with.

As a change from claret, vin de Graves is an excellent wine for summer use, and is a very pleasant drink with seltzer ; while every one who has been in Germany knows the wonderfully good and cheap white wines of the hock order, which are made from the vineyards

along the Rhine tributaries ; but I believe these are too light to travel.

To return, however, to the more ordinary routine of dinner, when claret is the only wine given, it may be supplemented in hot weather by shandy-gaff, which few men will refuse if well made and well iced. Another very popular beverage is cider cup, which, when well made with oranges and lemon, balm and borage, and duly qualified with Maraschino and eau-de-vie, is one of the very best cups it is possible to concoct. For liqueurs, there are none better than Chartreuse, Benedictine, or Kirsch ; Maraschino, Curaçoa, Kummel, &c., being simpler in flavouring, tire the palate more quickly ; but this must be a matter of taste. For a *chasse* with coffee, *fine champagne* will be chosen in preference to the perfumed liqueurs by most epicures. As to coffee, there is the old French adage to go by : it must be "strong as death, black as night, sweet as love," to which one might add, "and clear as truth."

Desserts have taken a new departure of late, and the sweets which decorate the table form an important part of its adornment. The prettiest way of serving these is in little silver trays, plates, bowls, salt-cellars, &c., or in Venetian glass trays and saucers. The fashion of restricting the sweets to one colour will probably soon die a natural death. When fruit is scarce and dear, a fruit salad in a large bowl is a very welcome form of serving it, while among conserves, the delicious Portuguese quince paste and marzipane (rather recondite luxuries), or any Turkish, West Indian, or Chinese preserves, are generally acceptable. Damson cheese and brandied cherries are two English sweetmeats of which we may well be proud, and which are best when home-made. For bonbons and preserved fruits, each person must

choose for herself, but glacé fruits are perhaps more toothsome than crystallized ones. Preserved roses, violets, and orange-flowers are among the prettiest and daintiest trifles wherewith to deck a banquet; blanched pistachios will be a novelty to many, and look very pretty; little cakes made of them, chopped and pounded, are very commendable.

Olives, nuts, and biscuits are the favourite part of the dessert with those who take wine after dinner. With port many men enjoy the old-fashioned sponge cake, and the thin wine biscuit should never be forgotten. Devilled almonds or walnuts should be served very hot in a napkin with the coffee, which, at small parties, most people now prefer handed immediately after dinner, before the ladies leave the table.

If a pine-apple be used it may be well to mention a crafty device of cutting it out in a solid cylinder from the rind, which remains intact like a hollow case. The fruit is then sliced, piled up as before, and its rind and crown slipped over it again till it is needed, so that the trouble of paring and dividing the pine after dinner is avoided. With strawberries many people prefer lemon-juice to cream, as being less cloying, and enhancing the flavour of the fruit.

Ices are among the most welcome dessert dishes, and if you have an icing-machine their flavours can be varied indefinitely. Tangerine orange-water is a delicious ice, and gooseberry cream flavoured with Maraschino is specially to be commended; biscuit ice and brown bread cream are always favourites; so are peach, apricot, and melon water, which last is a very delicately-flavoured "gelid sweetness." Whole strawberries or cherries frozen in with the cream will be found to add originality to those ices. Coffee and chocolate ices may be a mistake, as many people do not

care for the latter flavour, and the hot coffee is too close at hand to render its frozen version artistic. The American ices, made of simply mashed fruit (not pulped or rubbed through a sieve) mixed with syrup and frozen, find favour with most people. As regards ice puddings properly so called and soufflés, their proper place is of course before, not after, the cheese or savoury.

## XIX.

## BATTERIE DE CUISINE.

MOST housekeepers who have read *Our Mutual Friend* have sympathized with Mrs. John Rokesmith when, in her attempts to master the culinary art under the direction of *The Complete British Housewife*, she was brought to a standstill by that exasperating mentor's directions to "take a salamander" as coolly as she would say "catch a Tartar," and have felt with Bella when she shut up the book with a bang, apostrophizing her instructress, "Oh, you *are* a stupid old thing; where on earth do you think I am to get it?"

Yet the *Complete British Housewife* had some reason on her side. True, a bad workman blames his tools; but delicate cookery is much aided, and time and trouble much economized, by various simple contrivances which the ordinary cook scorns, and which her mistress does not understand. But there is another variety of cook yet more aggravating, and that is she who lays the blame of all her failures on the inadequacy of her kitchen plenishing, and who, when her much-tried mistress supplies her with the utensils so strenuously demanded, leaves them to rot and rust unused in the seclusion of the scullery or the damp cellar, whence they only emerge to reach the dustman's cart, and to be sold as old iron. Is this an unusual experience? I trow not.

But to turn to the needs of the ideal kitchen for a small household such as the series of papers now at an end have held in mind, I would first say a word as to the kitchen and its furniture. Let a cook have a pride in it, and it will influence every detail of her work. Chairs, tables, &c. must be left to the judgment of the mistress, and so must details; but it may be suggested how much the cheerfulness of many a dreary kitchen would be improved if, instead of the usual stone-coloured paint and drab distempered walls, the dressers, doors, &c. were painted a dark brown, the colour of old oak, and the walls washed a warm golden-buff tint. Of course there are many other arrangements of colour that may be preferred to this; but it is cheery and suitable, and wears well. A dark red cork carpet on the floor also is warmer, both to feeling and eyes, than the customary linoleum.

When furnishing a small kitchen for cookery such as I have dealt with, it is a good plan to make out your *batterie de cuisine* from the most extensive and expensive list furnished by most good ironmongers, rather than from the smaller ones, as in the former are mentioned the various luxuries for delicate cooking which you need, and which are ignored in the more modest catalogues. You may reduce the forty stew-pans to four; may strike out the turbot kettle, and renounce the five-gallon stock-pot; but it is only in the lists for large kitchens that you will find any mention of larding needles, vegetable scoops or cutters, cucumber-slicers or apple-corers—things costing but a few pence, but invaluable in a kitchen where anything beyond the plainest roast and boiled is studied.

The number of stewpans, as that of saucepans and frying-pans needed, must be settled by your own discretion. A stock-pot is a necessity if soup is to be

the economy as well as the luxury of the house, and a large iron boiling pot is one of the expensive items which cannot be omitted from your list. But do not be led into the purchase of a fish-kettle in which your slice of salmon or cod, or your chicken turbot, will be well-nigh lost, and which takes up most of the available space on the top of the stove. If you have ever occasion to boil a whole salmon, you can borrow the necessary kettle from your fishmonger. For every day for six or eight people quite a small kettle is sufficient, and far more convenient.

A bain-marie is an immense convenience and luxury, and, if the dinner be somewhat elaborate, it needs experience to know how the cooking is improved and the cook's time and temper saved by the sauces, &c., each emptied into their separate stewpot, having been prepared beforehand, and all at the right time, and gently warming up in their bath of boiling water. But a huge bain-marie, such as is usually sold, stultifies its own convenience. Get your tinman to make you a tray of block-tin some 15 inches square and 4 deep; then choose some six or eight small steel stewpans, deep, but of small diameter; put these into the tin, and rigorously forbid their ever being used on the fire except in their water bath, and for the purpose of warming up the sauces, &c., that have been prepared earlier in the day.

A wire frying basket is imperative, and so is a deep stewpan for frying in, and a nice frying-pan kept for the exclusive use of omelettes. Braising-pans are often offered to young housekeepers, but they are expensive; and fricandeaus, &c. can be perfectly well prepared if set in a closed stewpan in the oven, allowed to simmer gently, basted frequently, and the salamander passed over them before serving.

The point of braising, as distinct from stewing, is that the meat is raised above its liquor and basted with it instead of being immersed therein, and the temperatures above and below the stewpan are equal one to the other. With regard to the salamander—Mrs. Rokesmith's *bête noire*—it may be observed that, useful as it is, cooks are apt to prefer the hot shovel, and they have some excuse. The salamander takes some time to get hot, is cumbrous to use, and, if the range be small, destroys the fire ; so, on the whole, a cheap shovel may be retained for the especial work of browning dishes that need it, will cost less at the beginning, and, properly used, will last for a long time.

Sieves are rather a weakness of mine. I like to have them of all sorts and sizes ; tammy cloths, and little strainers and sifters, are also among the cook's most useful handmaids. Three jelly bags are needed, one for sweet jelly, one for aspic, and the third for soup clearing—those made at home from thick flannel are far preferable to the felt ones. An American potato-masher is now to be found in almost every kitchen, and a most useful little machine it is.

The French fireproof china is one of the blessings of which our ancestors wotted not ; but there is nothing so nice for maccaroni, fish, or vegetables au gratin, and many other purposes, as the white oval shallow dishes, while the china soufflé dishes are far cleaner-looking and nicer than the heavy plated ones. Now that it is so much the fashion to serve various dishes in separate portions, the little white china cases are indispensable. They may be used for a thousand purposes—soufflés, salads, gratins, baked eggs, &c. ; in fact, for hors d'œuvres, savouries, sweets, and entrées of many kinds, —and enable one to serve up small remains of dishes looking as fresh and tempting as on their first appear-

ance at table. A casserole is a great addition to one's cooking gear, and should always be sent to the table with a napkin pinned neatly round outside. Of late years the mode has obtained in Paris of sending up dishes in the vessel wherein they were cooked, the *croûte au pot* in its brown earthenware pipkin ; the sole Normande in its baking dish ; the stewed fowl in its casserole, &c.

A marble pestle and mortar are expensive, and the less weighty ones in Wedgwood ware serve equally well for most purposes. For making puff pastry a marble slab is a great luxury, and can be acquired at a sale for a few shillings. Machines for facilitating the manual labour of cookery grow more numerous and more complex every year, but the ones really needed are not ruinous. A coffee-mill and a mincing machine are perhaps the most indispensable, but a mechanical bread-grater is a very useful addition to the kitchen, and so is a deft little contrivance for cutting up vegetables for soup. A coffee-roaster is really required if you wish coffee to fulfil its noblest possibilities, and is not expensive. Two American notions I have seen described which should surely be as successful here as across the Atlantic—a cake-beater, which would obviate the weary toil incident to the making of pound or sponge cake, and a meat-chopper which really cuts instead of mashing meat.

There is such a variety of ice machines that it is difficult to exalt one above its fellow ; but after due experience I should declare for the American Star machines, as satisfactory in every way—durable, simple, reliable, and cheap. An ice machine is a really economical extravagance, and helps one to vary one's dinners at a small cost ; sorbets or granitos, ice puddings, ordinary ices, or iced coffee being all possible with it.

For iced soufflés or biscuits an ice cave is necessary, and it is less trouble than a machine, if iced asparagus, curry, &c. are needed. There are regular machines for crushing ice, wherein to freeze your ices, or to serve between an outer silver dish and a glass one containing a mayonnaise, or to set oysters on; but in default of such conveniences a rough and ready plan, which answers perfectly well, is to keep a bag of coarse sacking in which to place the ice, already roughly splintered with an ordinary ice-breaker; draw the strings of the bag tight, and hammer on the ice within it hard with a large wooden mallet. By this means the ice can be pounded as fine as you please in a very short time.

Small moulds are more in fashion now than large ones, but do not choose them of too fanciful or peculiar a design, or you will soon grow dead sick of them. Darioles are really the most useful. A Savarin mould is a capital thing, not only applied to its own use, but for jellies, aspics, &c. The simpler cake tins are the better, and for scolloped oysters, &c., the little French brown china pipkins have quite usurped the place of the real scollop shells. For egg-beaters I prefer the Dover for general use, but small whisks made of loops of wire are necessary for clearing jellies, aspics, soup, whipping iced soufflés, Savoy batter, &c., and for making meringues, no plan is really as sure and safe as beating the whites of eggs on a plate with the blade of a knife. The mention of meringues brings me to that of forcing-pipes, the abuse whereof is one of the excesses of culinary decoration in the present day. Despite this, their services are very valuable; canapés of all kinds are easier to arrange with their aid, and so are cake icings, &c. Meringues and éclairs can be prettily shaped with them, and rose forcing-pipes of

different sizes are most handy for making quenelles and preventing the chief trouble thereof—their deft shaping with spoons. If the quenelles be forced through the pipe into a buttered stewpan, and then hot water gently poured round them previous to poaching, there will be very little trouble and no difficulty in the process.

This chapter is not intended to give a complete list of kitchen furnishings, but a few small conveniences likely to be forgotten may be added. Apple-corers, vegetable punches and shapers, and larding needles have been already mentioned. Steak tongs and cucumber slicers are also useful, and a cherry-stoner is a most convenient little implement. For lemon-squeezers, the glass ones recently introduced are infinitely the best. Wire trays, such as are used by confectioners for cakes to dry on, are very handy ; and a little brass skillet for making transparent icing or mulling wine (and for nothing else) is almost a necessity. Our grandmothers had their silver saucepans for such refined purposes. Always have plenty of nice clean wooden spoons. A palette knife should be kept for smoothing over surfaces masked with cream or Vienna icing, &c., and *à propos* of cakes, a box of circular cutters, wherewith to stamp out little dessert cakes, &c., should not be forgotten. The expensive and cumbrous old-fashioned weighing machine may well be avoided and a spring balance chosen in its place, as being far cheaper as well as more convenient and satisfactory.



RECIPES FROM 'THE QUEEN.'



## HORS D'ŒUVRES.

CAVIARE.—The nearest approach in England to the Russian method of serving this dainty is to mix it with a little salad oil and a squeeze of lemon-juice, and spread it thickly, when so prepared, on hot buttered crumpets, or, better still, on the thin pikelets which may be procured in Derby and other northern towns, also, I believe, at some London bakers, and which are very like the Russian cakes used for this purpose. If served at the beginning of a meal, it should be spread on small squares of dry toast, well-buttered, care being taken not to be niggardly as regards the caviare. Caviare eggs, made by mixing the pounded yolks of hard-boiled eggs with a like quantity of caviare, a little salad oil, a few drops of lemon-juice, and cayenne, and filling the half whites with this mixture, form a pretty *hors d'œuvre*, especially if they be set on fried circular croûtons spread with watercress butter. The caviare and egg mixture might also be set in aspic jelly, small dariole moulds being used for the purpose. If you are fortunate enough to procure the large grained unpressed caviare, it cannot be better treated than by simply serving it in its jar, with the accompaniments of fresh butter and crisp toast. Caviare sandwiches are delicious, and small balls of caviare should be strewn

over the surface of any Russian salad deserving its name.

HORS D'ŒUVRES.—Perhaps some of these *hors d'œuvres* might suit "Tiger Cat," they are all easily prepared.—*Oyster Aspics*: Beard a dozen small plump oysters and parboil them for an instant; pour a little aspic jelly into the bottom of six plain dariole moulds, let it set, and then put into each an oyster, previously seasoned very slightly with lemon-juice and cayenne, then another dessertspoonful of aspic; and, when that is also firm, another oyster, and fill up with jelly. Turn out by wrapping a cloth, just wrung out in hot water, for an instant round the moulds.—*Anchovy Salad*, made of filleted anchovies dressed with oil, tarragon vinegar, stoned olives, capers, and chopped salad herbs, and served with thin slices of brown or rye bread, makes an excellent beginning to dinners, and so does a sardine salad, with slices of cold boiled onion and hard-boiled egg dressed with oil, vinegar, and herbs in the same way as the foregoing recipe, and served with the brown bread. Another salad which is a perfect *hors d'œuvre* is composed of cold boiled pimentos (the large Spanish green peppers) cut in slices and mixed with stoned olives, capers, and Norwegian anchovies dressed with oil and tarragon vinegar.—*Tomato Baskets*: Cut horizontally in half the required number of ripe red tomatoes—the round, smooth rose-red ones, not more than 2 inches in diameter, should be used. Scoop out the interior with a teaspoon, and leave them to drain free from juice. When sufficiently drained, place in each a dessertspoonful of mayonnaise sauce, and fill up the tomatoes with chopped white of egg, the yolks rubbed through a sieve; boned and chopped anchovies and chopped olives, either in layers, with the yolk of an egg on the top, or divided into the four quarters

of the circle of the tomato, a caper being set in the centre. Serve on fried croûtons, masked with mayonnaise, and stick a piece of parsley stalk across the tomato so as to form the handle of the basket. These tomato baskets are also excellent filled with pounded pheasant or any kind of game delicately flavoured, mixed with a little butter or cream and covered with chopped aspic jelly.—*Iced curry*: Make some good mayonnaise sauce, and mix therewith a little curry powder to taste. Have ready a pint of picked shrimps, and mix them thoroughly with the sauce. Half fill some china ramequin cases (the larger ones, some  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches across, are the best) and fill up with cold rice boiled so that every grain is separate. Set in ice and salt for two hours. The remnants of sweetbreads, chicken, lobster, crab, may be utilized as an iced curry.

LADY EMILY.—*Stuffed Olives en Canapé*.—Stuffed olives are one of the very best savouries either as an opening or a conclusion of dinner; but there is a great variety of formulæ for their preparation. The following, however, is an excellent recipe, and is not to be found in any cookery book:—Prepare some canapés with as many small, thin, circular croûtons of fried bread as you have guests, placing on each of these a slice of tomato not more than a quarter of an inch thick, and free from seeds and juice. Mask the slices of tomato smoothly with mayonnaise sauce, which must be very thick and stiff. Pare some French olives free from their stones, allowing four to each person, and have ready some fillets of anchovies (each fish making four fillets) well rubbed in beetroot juice; roll a fillet up neatly round a caper, add a grain or two of cayenne, and lightly dip one side into a drop of tarragon vinegar, then insert it in one of the stoned olives. When you have thus

stuffed all your olives, place four on each prepared canapé in the form of a cross, with a tiny spray of chervil in the centre, and serve on salad or hors d'œuvre plates. You may vary this recipe by spreading the croûtons with some watercress butter instead of the tomato and mayonnaise, and working it up round the edges so as to resemble a nest, the olives nestling inside and doing duty for eggs.

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## SOUPS.

HOUSEKEEPER.—*Crab Bisque*.—The soup which you met with at the Paris restaurants was the famous bisque d'écrevisses, renowned as an almost historic dish by French authors. It is not difficult to make, but needs a little trouble and attention. Crayfish are expensive, but a capital bisque may be made either of lobster or crab, the latter fish being at once the cheapest and the most savoury. Put 2 oz. of butter in a saucepan with one carrot, one onion, a little celery, four shallots, bay leaf, thyme, and parsley ; fry for five minutes, and then add 2 oz. of flour, stir well together, and in another two minutes add three pints of fish stock, made of the bones of any fish from the previous day's dinner. If you have no stock ready, water will serve, but the soup will not be so good. When the soup boils draw it to the side of the stove, and let it simmer for half an hour, then strain it off. In another saucepan boil for ten minutes the flesh and yellow pith of a good-sized crab in a pint of French white wine—Graves or Chablis—and then strain

off the wine and add it to the broth already made. Pound the crab well in a mortar, with 2 oz. of butter, four washed and boned anchovies, and the crust of a French roll, which must previously have been lightly fried in butter, and season with nutmeg, lemon-juice, and a little cayenne. Rub this through a sieve, add it to the strained broth, and thoroughly stir them over the fire together till they are well amalgamated. If you wish to serve it as bisque d'écrevisses, have a dozen crayfish, split lengthwise in half, and put the tails aside. Clean the shells and fill them with fish forcemeat, seasoned with a little parsley, shallot, and anchovy, and put them in the oven to bake for ten minutes; then place them in a hot tureen, together with the picked tails of the crayfish, and pour the soup over them. This may seem a somewhat elaborate recipe, but it is simplified as far as is possible. You can order the crayfish from your fishmonger, or can procure preserved ones from Morel or Marshall. Most French *chefs* use double the quantity of wine, but you will find a pint sufficient for the tastes of most people. Sherry may be used, but imparts a Britannic heaviness to the soup; the light French white wine is nicer. This soup is excellent iced if you like to follow that fashionable vanity when next you have a party. Iced soups are only suitable for suppers or evening refreshment.

MRS. R.—*Bouillabaisse*.—I do not wonder that you long to rival the powers of les Frères Roubion by attempting the “noble dish” which has helped to give their restaurant, the “Reserve,” its fame, the Bouillabaisse; but it is not possible to produce here in England an exactly similar soup to that which is the boast of the Marseilles hostelry, as the fish used in that glorious hotch-potch are not caught on our shores. The following recipe, however, you will find

produce a very fair imitation of the Provençal stew. Slice two good-sized Spanish onions rather thinly, and fry them for a few minutes in a wide shallow stewpan, with a bay leaf, a clove of garlic, and two tablespoonfuls of salad oil, till the onions are a pale brown; then put into the pan one red mullet, a small slice of cod, a small sole, and a fresh haddock or whiting, together with the flesh of a small lobster, all cut into fillets, or pieces about three inches long. Add enough warm water to just cover the fish, together with four tomatoes cut in slices and freed from seeds, half a large lemon, without the pips or rind, cut in small dice, a dessertspoonful of Spanish sweet red pepper, a little salt, a pinch of saffron, and two glasses of French white wine. Set on a hot fire and boil quickly for about twelve minutes, when the fish should be done. Mix a small dessertspoonful of flour with a little of the fish gravy, so that it is smooth, and throw it into the soup; it must not be enough to thicken it, only just to prevent its being quite as thin as water. Add a tablespoonful of finely-chopped parsley, and boil for one minute longer. Line a tureen or deep dish with the crusts of French rolls cut half an inch thick. Pour the gravy of the bouillabaisse over these, and if you like the pieces of fish also, or you may serve the latter in a different dish, both fish and sauce, however, being helped together into soup plates. It is an admirable dish and will help you to keep fast days both luxuriously and economically, as it is very nourishing.

LOVER OF SOUP.—I am not surprised at your complaint that your cook cannot make good Julienne soup as one has it abroad. It is a thing one hardly ever gets rightly made in England. Even the best cooks here conceive it to be clear soup, with a few shreds of vegetables added, instead of a weak consommé, full of shreds of vegetables, and with a distinct herbal flavour.

The true Julienne soup is never wine-clear, owing to the way in which the vegetables are cooked therein ; but here is the formula of this type of herbal soups as prepared by those erstwhile famous *restaurateurs* Dubost Frères, of Brussels : Shred finely equal quantities of carrot (only the red part), turnips, celery, leeks, onions, cabbage, lettuce, sorrel, and chervil : place the leeks and onions over the fire in a small frying-pan with a good-sized bit of butter, and blanch the rest of the herbs and vegetables in boiling water for five minutes. Drain them free of the water, and place them, together with the onions and leeks, in a stewpan with a little powdered sugar, an ounce of fresh butter, and just sufficient stock broth to cover them. Let the vegetables simmer gently for two hours, when add as much more stock as you require soup, and when quite hot serve. Of course if your cook adds sherry to this soup, and so entirely ruins the delicate flavour of herbs and vegetables, you cannot expect it to be a success ; but follow this recipe faithfully, and you will find it delicious.

MRS. B. (Leamington).—*Savoury Custard*.—There is savoury custard and savoury custard. When it is properly prepared you can have no more delicious addition to clear soup, but often one is served with a tough, tasteless sponge. It is quite easy to make well, as follows : Break a whole egg in a basin, and add by degrees half a gill of cream, and ditto of good stock broth, into which you have dissolved a little Liebig ; season delicately with nutmeg, pepper, and salt, pour into a buttered gallipot, which cover with a piece of buttered paper, and steam very slowly for half an hour, never allowing the water beneath it to boil, as it is that which makes the custard full of the holes to which you object. When well set, take it out and put away till quite cold, when it may be turned out and stamped out with a

cutter as you please. This is an excellent dinner also for a young child or an invalid, very delicate and nourishing. You may use milk instead of cream, but the custard will not be nearly so good.

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## FISH.

LADY M.—*Filleted Soles Rouennaises*.—The bill of fare for your little dinner a fortnight hence is excellent; the only improvement to be suggested is that you should have a fish entrée instead of the fried soles, and serve the asparagus iced with mayonnaise sauce as a second-course dish, instead of with the roast lamb. For the fish entrée you might have salmon Trafalgar, *i. e.* grilled salmon cutlets—with some piccalilli made hot, and piled in the centre, its sauce being poured round, not over, the cutlets; or, if your cook is equal to a somewhat elaborate dish, sole Rouennaise, than which there is no better dressed fish. For this dish you must order two middling-sized soles to be skinned and filleted, making eight fillets; spread these out at length, and mask them thinly with some whiting forcemeat, made by pounding the flesh of a raw whiting or haddock, previously rubbed through a sieve, with 2 oz. of bread panada, 1 oz. of butter, and a raw egg to every 4 oz. of fish. The forcemeat must be seasoned with nutmeg, grated lemon-peel, pepper, salt, and a few drops of tarragon vinegar, and coloured a bright red with some powdered lobster spawn. When the fillets are spread with this mixture, double them up so that the two pointed ends of each fillet are one on the other,

the forcemeat forming a layer between. Melt 1 oz. of butter in a sautépan, in which arrange the prepared fillets so that all the pointed ends meet together in the middle of the pan, forming the radii of a circle. Place a small round flat lid on them or circular weight, so as to prevent the tips of the fillets from curling up in cooking. Sprinkle a little chopped parsley and some clarified butter over them, with pepper and salt, and place them in a moderate oven to cook for twenty minutes. Then dress them in a circle in an entrée or vegetable dish as you would cutlets, and pour over them some matelote sauce prepared with fish stock, previously made from the bones of the sole, flavoured with herbs and vegetables, boiled for an hour and a half, strained off, and thickened with 1 oz. of butter kneaded with 1 oz. of flour, well stirred into the stock, and simmered for a quarter of an hour. Put a gill of this sauce into a small stewpan, together with a glass of French white wine, the liquor of a dozen oysters, or of a pint of mussels when oysters are out of season; stir well over the fire, and add the oysters, a quarter of a pint of shelled and bearded mussels, the tails of a dozen crayfish, or, in default of them, 3*d.* worth of picked shrimps, half a small tin of button mushrooms, and three anchovies cut in small pieces; stir together till they are hot, and then pour the sauce over the filleted soles, letting the ragoût—*i.e.* the oysters, mushrooms, &c.—be piled in the centre. This sauce is the one used for a matelote of eels, or sole à la Normande, and is excellent with many kinds of dressed fish. Write and tell me how you succeed with this dish; it is so good that it deserves a little trouble being taken over its concoction.

MRS L. C. (Aldershot).—*Stewed Eels*.—If you are fond of eels, you can cook them in a hundred ways.

Eel soup is excellent, and eel pie, well made, is supreme among fish pies, while an eel aspic is one of the prettiest supper dishes. They are also very good spatch-cocked, but I prefer them stewed, either with wine or *en matelote*. Here is the recipe for the former dish, which you may turn into a *matelote* by the addition of some oysters, mussels, crayfish, and button mushrooms. Cut the eels into pieces three inches long, and put them in a stewpan, together with half-a-pint of good well-flavoured stock, a bit of glaze, or a teaspoonful of Liebig, two glasses of sherry, a teaspoonful of anchovy, ditto chopped parsley, and a few button onions or a teaspoonful of chopped shallot. Stew very gently for half an hour, or until the eels are nearly done. Knead two ounces of butter with one of flour in a small saucepan, and let it fry over the fire for a few moments—not to colour, but just to prevent the flour from tasting raw. Put this thickening into the stewpan where the eels are, and stir gently, so that it is thoroughly mixed in with the sauce; add some button mushrooms, simmer for five minutes longer, and serve garnished with fried sippets.

MRS. B.—*Different Ways of Cooking Salmon*.—You are not the only person who complains of growing tired of boiled salmon hot, and boiled salmon cold, with remoulade or ravigote sauce; still cold salmon is so nice an item in a dinner menu at this time of year, that I cannot advise you to discard it. Try it with horse-radish sauce, which makes quite a different thing of it, and is newer than the varieties of mayonnaise, whereof you are weary. To vary the monotony of hot boiled salmon, I may suggest *à la* Trafalgar, or in a souchet, as follows: Divide the salmon into small fillets, and put them to boil for five minutes in a stewpan, in a little clear fish stock, with forty tiny sprigs of picked parsley.

a little chopped parsley root and grated horseradish, a teaspoonful of powdered sugar, and a little pepper and salt. Serve in soup plates, with thin slices of brown bread and butter handed separately. This is a renowned Greenwich dish, as is Trafalgar salmon, and you will find it delicious. Another excellent method of cooking salmon is the French way, *au bleu*, i. e. stewed in equal quantities of claret and good stock. It should be drained from the sauce when cooked, and served on a napkin garnished with fried parsley. The sauce to be served with it should be separate, but may be made from the stock in which it was cooked, thickened with flour and butter, and with a teaspoonful of French mustard, ditto essence of anchovies, and some capers added to it. Of course, there are many richer ways of stewing salmon, &c., but I think the above recipes are more of the kind you require.

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## ENTRÉES, ETC.

R. M. (East Grinstead).—*Eggs à la Maître d'Hôtel*.—Do you know eggs à la maître d'hôtel? They may meet your need of a maigre entrée, as, when properly prepared, they are quite dainty enough to form part of the menu of a modest dinner-party. Boil eight fresh eggs for ten minutes, shell them, cut them into thick slices, and toss them lightly in some maître d'hôtel sauce, previously prepared as follows: Put 1 oz. of flour and 2 oz. of fresh butter into a stewpan, and knead them smoothly together with a wooden spoon; add one onion

thinly sliced, a little celery (or celery seed), a small carrot sliced thin, a little parsley, thyme, and bay leaf, nutmeg, pepper, and salt, and rather more than half a pint of milk. Let this boil quickly over the fire for twenty minutes, stirring all the time, and taking great care it does not catch or burn. Rub through a tammy or sieve into a basin ; add  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz. of butter, a tablespoonful of finely-chopped parsley, a squeeze of lemon, and a teaspoonful or more of tarragon vinegar, according to taste. Replace in the stewpan, and, as said before, toss the sliced eggs therein for three or four minutes. Serve in a china entrée dish—not a silver one, as the eggs will tarnish the latter horribly—and garnish with fried croûtons. The addition of a few truffles sliced will make this dish ten times as delicious.

HON. M. G.—*Duck Stewed with Olives*.—You may, if you like, cut up the duck into fillets, and serve the stoned olives in the centre ; but as you wish to serve the bird as a remove, I think it will be better to cook it whole. The orthodox sage and onion stuffing would be too strong, and would mar the delicate flavour of the olives, so stuff it with Provençal stuffing, *i. e.* with Portugal onions, parboiled, chopped fine, and stewed over the fire with 3 oz. butter, the crumb of a French roll soaked in milk, chopped parsley, nutmeg, pepper and salt, and the yolks of three eggs. Stir this stuffing over the fire till it is a fairly stiff paste, then fill the duck with it, and rub the bird over with lemon-juice. Put the duck in a stewpan, together with a little carrot and celery, a small clove of garlic, a little bay leaf, parsley, and thyme, an onion stuck with four cloves, and half a gill of salad oil. Fry the duck in this slowly on the top of the stove till it is a light brown on all sides, then add enough stock to just cover the vegetables, but not the duck, cover with the lid of the

stewpan, and put in the oven, or on the top of the stove, to stew slowly for an hour, basting frequently with its own liquor. When the duck is done, take it out and put it by on a dish, strain the liquor off, and skim off the grease, boil the liquor down to half, add a little butter and flour kneaded together to thicken it, and about thirty stoned olives. Replace the duck in the stewpan with the sauce and the olives, and stew for another quarter of an hour, when it will be ready. If you like you may add a glass of Burgundy to the sauce, and broiled tomatoes are very good with this dish, served separately.

MRS. POWELL.—*Veal Cutlets à la Russe*.—The following may suit you as a pretty little entrée, not too elaborate or troublesome in its preparation : Trim 1 lb. of veal cutlet into round or oval pieces half an inch thick and about 2 inches in diameter, Fry them lightly on both sides, and then set on a plate to cool while you get ready the following mixture. Put into a small saucepan two sticks of horseradish grated, four finely-chopped shallots,  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb. finely-chopped raw ham, a little powdered thyme, a dessertspoonful of powdered sugar, 1 oz. of butter, two tablespoonfuls tarragon vinegar (or less, according to taste), and a small glass of sherry or Madeira. Cover with the lid, and stew very slowly by the side of the fire for twenty minutes ; then mix in the yolks of two raw eggs, and stir over the fire till the mixture is set, but not curdled. Spread the top side of your cutlets with this compound, laying it on about half an inch thick, and, when cold and stiff, egg over the tops and sides, and mask them with fried bread-crumbs and grated Parmesan mixed together, the proportion of bread-crumbs to cheese being two to one. Range the cutlets, when prepared, at the bottom of a buttered sautépan, with a spoonful or two of gravy

under them to prevent their drying. Cover over with a buttered paper, and put them into a quick oven for five minutes—just long enough to become thoroughly hot. Have your dish ready, with a centre of very young broad beans, round which place the cutlets so as to slightly overlap one another, pour some thin tomato or Italian sauce round them, and serve at once. If you see the cutlets are as they should be when placed in the sautépan ready to be heated up (and this can be done quite early in the day), even your irritatingly stupid cook has no excuse to make any mistake in the dishing up, and your mind should be at rest about this dish at least. You may as well give her a caution not to pour the sauce over the cutlets instead of round them, as the former habit is a very favourite blunder with bad cooks, and in the present case would spoil the appearance of the dish. It certainly is worrying not to be sure what horrible mistakes have been made as regards a dinner till they are revealed on the appearance of the dishes at table. When a cook is well-intentioned, though dense or forgetful, it is well to write out on a sheet of paper beforehand the details of dishing up, &c., so that she shall have no excuse for mistaking or neglecting them.

ENTRÉE LOVER.—*Filet Béarnaise and Foie Gras Frutters*.—I am afraid the entrées served at your table will never improve either in flavour or variety till your cook has realized that the secret of an entrée lies in its sauce. We may vary the formula and the manner of dishing up from time to time, and dub these variations on well-known dishes by new names to give novelty to our menus, but the basis of “side dishes,” as our mothers called them, varies but little, and in the philosophy of sauces is the philosophy of entrées. The sauces from these dishes are deductions, so to speak,

from foundation sauces, of which there are only a few, Béchamel, Espagnol, &c. The real point from which to begin in ordering a dinner is the entrées, as the stock of the soup should be different from the foundation sauce to which that of the entrée forms part, and the dishes coming after should also be distinct from them as regards sauces and flavouring. After this little preaching, I will give you two very simple recipes for entrées which are yet excellent. *Filet Béarnaise*: Have some tender fillet steak cut into pieces about three-quarter inch thick and two and half inches square. Rub these on both sides with salad oil, season with pepper and salt, and broil over a clear fire. Dish these in a circle with broiled tomatoes or fried potato chips in the centre, and pour over the fillets some Béarnaise sauce, prepared as follows: Slice five shallots, and put them in a small stewpan, with a bay leaf, four cloves, one tablespoonful of tarragon vinegar, and another of French; simmer these slowly by the side of the fire for three-quarters of an hour, and strain the vinegar off; it ought to be thoroughly impregnated with the flavour of the shallot, &c. Put the yolks of four raw eggs in a gallipot, with 2 oz. of butter, and half a pint of strong clear beef gravy (if you have none, use Liebig's essence, with water, but be sure to make it strong); stir this over the fire in the gallipot, set in a saucepan of boiling water, and when the butter is melted, add the strained vinegar from the shallots, and a little pepper and salt. Go on stirring till the sauce thickens to the consistency of good cream, when pour over the fillets. My next recipe is rather more recondite, but quite easy to prepare. *Foie Gras Fritters*: Make some frying batter by mixing two heaped-up tablespoonfuls of flour with the yolk of an egg, an ounce of dissolved butter (or a tablespoonful of

salad oil), and a little pepper and salt : when thoroughly mixed, add by degrees about a gill of water, and work the batter with a wooden spoon till it is perfectly smooth. Let it stand for some hours, and just before you use it add to it two whites of eggs which you have previously beaten to a stiff froth. Have ready a frying-pan of *boiled* fat (it is not boiling till the fat ceases to frizzle), and some nice pieces of foie gras, half-an-inch thick, about, and two inches by one-and-a-half in size, seasoned with salt, lime-juice, and a very little cayenne. Dip each piece of foie gras into the batter, drop them gently into the boiling fat, turn them over in the pan lightly with a fork, and when fried crisp and of a light colour drain them and dish them up on a napkin. Calves' brains, sweetbreads, or fowls' livers also make delicious fritters, but those of foie gras are *facile princeps*.

LADY B.—*Veal Fricandeau with Spinach Purée*.—Certainly a fricandeau of veal is one of those dishes which can never grow old-fashioned. Its excellence is the guarantee of its finding favour with all true epicures, but a good recipe for it is found in very few cookery books. A pound and a half of veal cutlet from the fillet will make a nice-sized fricandeau, but be sure that it is cut quite 3 inches thick. Lard it well with bacon on both sides, and then choose a stewpan just large enough to hold it conveniently ; put 1 oz. of butter in the pan, and fry the veal therein for ten minutes. Lift the veal out, and cover the bottom of the pan with two carrots and two onions cut in slices, one shallot, a bouquet of parsley, lemon thyme, and bay leaf, two cloves, two blades of mace, ten pepper-corns, and a little salt. Add any bacon trimmings and rinds, and replace the veal on the vegetables. Moisten with just enough good white stock to cover the vegetables, but not the

meat, put the stewpan lid on, and set it in the oven to stew slowly for two hours, frequently taking it out and basting the veal with its own gravy. When done, lift the meat out and reduce the sauce, strain it off, and put it back into the stewpan with the veal, to allow the latter to colour. The side of the fricandeau which is downward in the pan will be darker than the uppermost side, so you must be sure to serve it with the former turned upwards in the dish. Have ready a very stiff purée of spinach, endive, or sorrel, and mix the sauce of the fricandeau into this, then make a mattress of the purée on the dish, and serve the fricandeau on the top of it.

A GOURMET.—*Prawn Curry*.—The Barataria prawns are excellent for this purpose ; they are the only tinned fish I know which are really almost equal to fresh, being preserved quite dry and enclosed in a linen bag, which prevents their touching the tin. You will find them quite satisfactory for mayonnaises or aspics, but they are best in curry. Cut up four large onions and a large clove of garlic, and put them in a stewpan, with 3 oz. of butter, a teaspoonful of good curry powder, and a dessertspoonful of curry paste. Set the stewpan by the side of the fire, so that the contents may simmer very slowly, and when the onions are soft add half a small cucumber cut in slices, one good-sized fresh tomato, ten green gooseberries (if unattainable, use a small, sharp apple), a dessertspoonful of tamarinds, a large teaspoonful of finely-chopped fennel, a fresh bay leaf, finely chopped, a very little powdered cinnamon, and a teaspoonful of green ginger, chopped. Let these all stew slowly for two hours, and then add a quarter of a fresh cocoa-nut grated, and a squeeze of lemon-juice, if the curry be not sufficiently piquant for you—some people also like half a teaspoonful of powdered sugar added. Rub the curry through a wire sieve, and

an hour before it is needed add the prawns, and warm up slowly by the side of the fire. A cold chutney of tomato pulp, chives, and green chillies, chopped up and mixed with a little oil and tarragon vinegar, should be served with it, and freshly-boiled rice of course. This curry makes an excellent cold entrée, mixed with half a pint of stiff aspic, poured into dariole moulds, and set on ice till quite firm.

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## COLD ENTRÉES.

LOVER OF NOVELTY.—*Lamb Cutlets in Mint Aspic (cold entrée).*—A novel cold entrée is lamb cutlets masked in mint aspic, and they are not at all difficult to prepare. Either braise or roast the best end of a neck of lamb, and when cold, trim into daintily-shaped cutlets not too thick. Have ready a pint of stiff aspic jelly, flavoured with mint, a little sugar, and some French vinegar, besides the ordinary flavouring, and when it is strained, but still liquid, mix into it four tablespoonfuls of finely-chopped mint. Pour a thin layer of this jelly, not more than the tenth of an inch deep, into a flat shallow tin, and when it is thoroughly set, place the cutlets thereon, and pour more of the liquid mint jelly on them, so as just to cover them. When it is set and stiff, pass a sharp knife round the outline of each cutlet, so as to cut it out from the surrounding jelly. Pass a cloth wrung out in warm water lightly under the bottom of the tin, and you will be able to detach the cutlets separately, each neatly

masked with the jelly on both sides. Dish them in a wreath round a mayonnaise of green peas, or a salad of peas simply dressed with oil and tarragon vinegar, &c. Chop up the fragments of jelly which remain in the tin, and garnish therewith the base of the cutlets.

YOUNG HOUSEKEEPER.—*Spinach Soufflé*.—If you want something new in the way of a second-course vegetable, I cannot suggest anything better than a spinach soufflé, especially as you say you are fond of spinach. The vegetable must be boiled, or rather stewed in a buttered saucepan, with only just enough water to prevent its burning. When cooked it must be wrung perfectly dry, well chopped, and rubbed through a fine wire sieve, and placed in a stewpan with two ounces of butter, and a gill of cream to every pound of spinach, add a little powdered sugar, nutmeg, pepper and salt, and when it is a smooth green paste remove it from the fire and let it cool slightly before working into it the raw yolks of three eggs. When cold, add the whites of the eggs whipped to a stiff froth, fill a soufflé dish—a china one is best—in the ordinary manner, and bake for forty minutes in a moderate oven. Before serving, strew a little grated ham over the soufflé, and you will find it a quaint and enticing dish.

BUSY BEE.—*Potato and Truffle Mayonnaise*.—As you are tired of Italian salad as a second-course dish you might try a truffle and potato salad, which, in spite of its fame, is a dish more often praised than met with. It may either be dressed with vinaigrette (the ordinary French mixture of oil and vinegar) or à la mayonnaise—in your case the latter is best. Boil, skin, and slice 2 lbs. new potatoes, and put them in a bowl with three-quarters of the contents of a small bottle of truffles sliced thinly, and a gill of good mayonnaise sauce

flavoured with the merest thought of shallot and, if liked, with tarragon and chervil. Mix the potatoes and truffles thoroughly with the sauce, and then dress the salad in a glass dish, masking the surface with more mayonnaise sauce. Chop or shred finely the two or three truffles you have reserved, and sprinkle them over the top. You may garnish round with thin slices of Bologna sausage, but this is really like gilding refined gold. Take care, however, to serve the salad, as an American novelist says "every self-respecting mayonnaise should be served," with the glass dish placed in a silver one, with crushed ice surrounding the inner dish. This fashion makes any cold dish look twice as tempting in hot weather.

R. T.—*Iced Curry*.—I am sure, if you once introduce a cold entrée, and discover how much trouble it saves your hard-worked cook when you have a dinner-party, you will extend the number of cold dishes in your menu. For a simple cold entrée I know nothing better than iced curry, and it is so quickly and easily made. To half a pint of good mayonnaise or Tartare sauce, add a rub of garlic, a teaspoonful of finely-chopped shallot, a dessertspoonful of good curry powder, a little dry mustard, a pinch of cayenne, and a pint of picked shrimps. Freeze in a pewter can buried in ice and salt for two hours, and then half fill with the mixture some little china ramequin cases, filling them up with cold rice, boiled so that every grain is separate. Chopped red and green chillies or powdered lobster coral is a pretty decoration on the top of the cases, and they should be served in a silver dish full of pounded ice surrounding them—of course this dish must only be made ready the instant before it is needed. Another capital cold entrée is little aspics of foie gras garnished with a mayonnaise of green peas,

but this does not need an elaborate description, as your cook can make aspic.

MARY K.—*Iced Crab Soufflé*.—You will find this recipe a really delicious cold entrée, and it is not much trouble to prepare when there is some good aspic at hand. Shred all the white meat of a good-sized crab into a basin, and when it is all pulled apart with two silver forks into tiny white flakes, add the rich part of the crab and a gill of good mayonnaise sauce, with a little cayenne; mix all these well together. In another basin half melt (so that it is just not quite solid) half pint aspic jelly by dipping the basin in some hot water, and then whip the aspic with a Dover egg-beater till it is all a thick froth, like the old-fashioned lemon sponge or Russian jelly. When it is thoroughly whipped mix it into the prepared crab before it gets quite stiff and set, and then fill the lining of a soufflé mould with this mixture, and cover with whipped aspic, and freeze in an ice cave or buried in ice and salt. Serve with a napkin pinned round the dish.

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## SWEETS, DRINKS, ETC.

HOUSEKEEPER.—*Pistachio Tartlets*. and “*Love’s Wells*.”—There is a wonderful variety of dainty little cakes which make perfect second-course dishes, and which are sufficiently uncommon to prevent any fear of your guests supposing you have been indebted for them to the nearest pastry-cook. Pistachio tartlets are delicious, and are not at all difficult to make. Line

some patty pans with very thin short paste, and then fill them with the following mixture; Blanch  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb. pistachio kernels, and pound them in a mortar till they are quite smooth, with a whole egg, a little grated lemon-peel, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb. castor sugar. Beat up the whites of four eggs to a stiff froth, and add the pounded pistachios, &c.; mix well, fill the prepared patty pans with the nuts, and strew a little powdered sugar on top. Bake in a moderate oven. Almond tartlets made in the same way are equally good. Another pretty sweet is "Love's Wells." Make or buy some pound cake, and with a tin cutter cut it into rounds  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter and an inch thick. With a smaller cutter of the same shape, stamp the upper surface of the cakes thus formed, so as to make an incision about  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch deep. Remove the inner round, and scoop out the interior of the cake, so as to form a hollow case. Almost fill these cases with whipped cream, flavoured with a little vanilla or lemon, and cover the top of the cream with a spoonful of apricot jam or apple jelly. Melt  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. icing sugar in a saucepan, with the juice of a lemon and two tablespoonfuls of white rum or French brandy. Do not let this icing boil, only become quite liquid, and then pour it over the surface of the cakes, so as to conceal the jam and the cream underneath, working it smoothly over the top and round the sides with a palette knife. Decorate with chopped pistachios while the icing is yet soft.

EVA.—*Iced Strawberry Fool*.—There is no mystery about strawberry fool, as you seem to imagine; it is simply a glorified form of the strawberry mash of our childhood, but it must be well iced and served in a large antique china bowl or antique tea-cups with saucers. Glass custard cups are never seen now at smart tables. Pick 3 lbs. of ripe strawberries, and mash

them with a wooden spoon in a basin, together with 1 lb. of castor sugar, the juice of a lemon, and a few drops of carmine. Rub this through a hair sieve, and add a pint and a half of stiffly whipped cream and a sherry glass of Maraschino. Freeze in a pewter can, buried in ice and salt, for two hours, or in an ice cave, if you possess one.

A. R. A.—*Creamed Rice*.—Perhaps the German creamed rice or tapioca may be a novelty to you. It is a very pretty sweet, and excellent with stewed fruit. Wash a large tea-cupful of rice well, and set to stew very slowly in nearly a pint of milk, with a piece of lemon-peel, an inch of vanilla bean, and an ounce of sugar. When the rice has absorbed all the milk and is quite tender, remove from the fire, and take out the lemon-peel and vanilla, and, when the rice is nearly cold, add a gill or more of stiffly whipped cream. Pile as rockily as possible in a glass dish, and set on ice.

ETHEL R.—*Sorbets*.—Sorbets have been in fashion for some years now in England as an integral part of smart dinners. They are served between the remove and the *rôt*, and are supposed to refresh and stimulate the palate for the second course. A sorbet, properly defined, is a semi-liquid ice, and should be served in tall glasses. They need, of course, to be frozen in a proper icing machine. Perhaps Roman punch is really the best possible sorbet; but I will give you a recipe for it, and for claret granito, a particularly pleasant and refreshing concoction. *Iced Roman Punch* (for six persons): A pint bottle of champagne or good Saumur, half a pint clarified syrup, half a pint pineapple syrup, a tea-cupful of strong green tea, the rind of an orange rubbed off on lump sugar, the strained juice of one and a half lemons, a little grated nutmeg, and

a large claret-glassful of brandy, ditto rum, ditto Maraschino. Mix all these thoroughly, and freeze well, as the amount of alcohol in the mixture makes this a somewhat tardy process. When the punch is frozen quite firm, have ready two whites of eggs, whipped stiffly, into which you have lightly mixed 2 oz. powdered sugar, as for meringues ; stir this by degrees, and a little at a time, into the punch with a wooden spoon, working it in thoroughly till the mixture becomes less solid, and more resembles a very thick cream. It must be sufficiently liquid to enable you to pour it into the glasses in which it is served. If you carry out this recipe carefully, Helen herself could have served the heroes with no more divine nepenthe than will be the result. *Claret Granito* is a less troublesome and less costly sorbet to prepare. Squeeze the juice of six oranges and one lemon to half a pint of syrup, and add to this the rind or zest of four oranges, rubbed off on sugar, and a bottle of claret. Taste to see if sweet enough, and then freeze ; a liqueur glass of Curaçoa may be added.

Y. P.—*Brown Bread Cream*.—Here is a delicious sweet which will take very little time to prepare, when next your dinner has to be expanded at a moment's notice. Whip a pint of good cream quite stiff, sweeten with powdered sugar, flavoured with a teaspoonful of essence of vanilla, and a liqueur glass of French brandy. Have 6 oz. of coarse brown bread-crumbs, made by rubbing the bread through a cullender, and mix these lightly but thoroughly with the cream. Pile as high and rockily as possible and strew with a few more crumbs, and 2 oz. of glacé cherries, or at this time of year you might use small fresh or wild strawberries, previously steeped in a little liqueur and lemon-juice.

LOVER OF SWEETS.—*Omelette au Rhum*.—Alack ! alack ! in asking to be told how to make an omelette you are demanding what is impossible. Omelette making can only be taught by practical demonstration and experience. It is the trick and art of the cook in dealing with the egg in the pan which makes an omelette a success. However, I will do my best to make the matter clear, and if you fail once try again. For a simple savoury omelette you should not beat the eggs after you have broken them, but simply knock them lightly about with a fork in a basin, yolks and whites together, but for a cheese omelette, or sweet omelette, you must break the whites and yolks of the eggs into separate basins. As the "*Omelette au Rhum*," regarding the concoction whereof you desire instructing, is one of the latter class, break six eggs into two basins, the whites in one, the yolks in the other, add to the yolks 1 oz. of powdered sugar, a little grated lemon-peel, and nutmeg,  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz. of fresh butter broken into small pieces, and a good tablespoonful of rum ; mix these smoothly together with a wooden spoon, and then whip the whites of the eggs separately to a stiff froth, and add it to the yolks, mixing them lightly but thoroughly together. Have 2 oz. of fresh butter ready melted in a frying-pan or omelette-pan on the stove, place it over a clear fire, and directly the butter begins to fritter, pour in the beaten eggs, &c. Do not stir the mixture in the pan, but as it begins to set keep pushing the omelette towards the further half of the pan, so as to form a demi-lune, and do not let it burn or catch underneath, as it will if the fire is too fierce. English omelettes are usually too dark a colour. Do not attempt to turn it, but, when it is set, hold the pan with it in it, slantwise before the front of the fire so as just to crisp the upper side. Turn it over into a hot

dish, have two tablespoonfuls of rum warmed in a fire-proof china casserole ; set fire to the rum, and pour it over the omelette at table.

AMY.—*Almond cake*.—It is rather difficult to comply with your requests for all entirely novel cake to serve as an *entremets*, but the following recipe will be new to most people, and you will find it makes a delicious sweet. Blanch a  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb. of sweet almonds and seven or eight bitter almonds, chop them all up very finely, then pound them smooth, and finally rub them through a wire sieve, an operation which you will find takes some little time. Break five eggs and put the yolks by themselves in a bowl, beat them up well, add a little grated lemon-peel, and sift in by degrees a  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb. castor sugar, and after that mix in lightly the powdered almonds, beating all the time. Whip the whites of the five eggs separately to a stiff froth, add them to the mixture, beating all well together, and pour into a buttered cake tin. The cake will take from half an hour to three-quarters in a moderate oven. Try it with a skewer to see if it be done, and turn it out from the tin on to a sieve to cool. When cold, make several holes with a skewer, and soak it, after the fashion of a tipsy cake, with rum, or brandy and sherry mixed according to taste. When it is thoroughly soaked, you may either mask it with whipped cream, piled high on the top and strewn with glacé cherries, or cover it with green butter icing, made by beating 2 oz. fresh butter to a cream with the yolk of a raw egg, 2 oz. castor sugar, and a liqueur glass of brandy or Benedictine, adding enough green colouring to make the mixture a pale pistache green ; smooth this over the cake with the blade of a palette knife dipped now and again in boiling water, and when the cake is entirely masked, ornament the top with chopped pistachios, angelica, or

glacé greengages. Lift it up carefully with a slice, and place on the dish it is to be served on, with an ornamental cake paper underneath it.

MRS. R. (YORK).—*Iced Gooseberry Fool and Coffee Mousse*.—Do not have too many sweets for your stand-up supper; very few people take them now, and strawberries and cream will make up for all deficiencies, especially if you have a large glass bowl of iced gooseberry fool on the supper-table, and have it replenished as often as need be. There is no better sweet at this time of year, but it must be carefully made. Stew very slowly a quart of green gooseberries with half a pound of white sugar, and a little water to prevent the fruit burning. Rub through a hair sieve, and use very little vegetable greening to make it a pretty colour; then add a liqueur glass of brandy or Maraschino, half a pint of cream whipped stiff, a little nutmeg and grated lemon-peel. Mix all well together, and freeze either in a freezing machine or in a pewter mould or can, buried in a tub of rough ice, mixed with salt and saltpetre. If iced in this way the fool will take two hours, and must be worked with a wooden spoon from time to time. A good custard may be used instead of cream, but the fool will not be so delicate. Coffee mousse, which you mention, is a delicious sweet, and may be served either frozen or simply cold. You must make a tea-cupful of the strongest and clearest coffee—essence of coffee, in fact—using a quarter of a pound of coffee to the tea-cup of water. Put the coffee, when made, with two yolks of eggs and an ounce of sugar, in a gallipot in a saucepan of boiling water, and stir over the fire till the mixture thickens; then let it get cold. Whip a pint of cream quite stiff, and add the coffee to it by degrees, so that it is smooth and thick. It looks best served in old china tea-cups and saucers.

I hope you will find both these recipes successes ; they are really much smarter and more modern than the old-fashioned jellies and creams.

MAY.—*Fruit Salad*.—No ; the time for fruit salad is by no means over, as you seem to think, because apples, grapes, and bananas are done with ; indeed, it has not yet begun, for those delectable compounds are never so nice as when strawberries and raspberries, cherries and currants add their juices and flavours to the “winier juice” wherewith they are blended. A really good fruit salad might have taxed the skill and judgment of our mother Eve “which choice to choose for delicacy best,” and any one who excels in their concoction is sure to be rewarded by the appreciation with which her efforts will be crowned. A large china bowl is the best dish in which to make them. For a summer fruit salad take equal quantities of strawberries, cherries, golden drop gooseberries, red or white currants, oranges, early peaches, plums, apricots, pine-apple or melon, and grapes, white and black—all or any of these, stoning the cherries, and halving plums and apricots, and cutting up the larger fruits into pieces about an inch square. To each pound of fruit have ready mixed a wine-glassful of sherry, with a liqueur-glassful of Maraschino, and another of Curaçoa ; place a layer of fruit in the bowl, strew it with sifted sugar, and ladle some of the wine and liqueur over it ; then more fruit, more sugar, and more wine till you have come to the end of your resources. The bowl should then be covered over with a stewpan lid, and buried in ice and salt, or placed in the refrigerator, as its coldness is one of its charms. It should be made some hours before it is wanted, so that the flavours may be properly blended, and just before serving, should be lightly but thoroughly mixed. Champagne and Kirsch may be used as a change from

the Maraschino and sherry. Do not be misled by the errors of your neighbours, and mix glacé or crystallized fruits, or brandied cherries with the fresh fruits: it is a great mistake, and spoils the delicacy and fragrance of the salad. Blanched almonds and pistachios are added by others, and are more allowable, though unnecessary. Making salads is always fascinating work to any one with gastronomic instincts; and this recipe will enable you to enjoy this summer the luscious wealth of your beautiful old garden—even more fully than you have done heretofore—and add to the attraction of your tennis parties.

YOUNG HOUSEKEEPER.—*Trifles for Summer Afternoon Tea.*—You may laugh, but really the newest and smartest cake you can have for afternoon tea is bread and jam cut into dainty finger-length sandwiches. Peach jam, strawberry, apricot, and greengage make the best sandwiches. Of course the bread must be cut thin, and well buttered before the jam is spread between the slices, if only on the ground of economy, as the same piece of bread does for both. Large strawberries cut in slices a quarter of an inch thick, strewn with sifted sugar, and put between thin slices of French roll spread with fresh butter, or better still, with Devonshire cream, make exquisite sandwiches, and so do pine-apples or bananas treated in the same fashion. Cream cheese sandwiches, sugared, not salted, are delicious served with strawberries. For savoury sandwiches, lettuce, cucumber, and tomato are much nicer at this time of year than the anchovies and caviare and smoked sardines that make such pleasant and dainty additions to the afternoon tea table in winter. Have you tried a very simple sandwich made of a nasturtium leaf, sprinkled with a little salt, and set between two thin circular pieces of bread-and-butter of its own size?

If not it will be a surprise to you to find how dainty it is in flavour. Shrimp sandwiches are very nice, but if you live in London it is an excellent plan to send to Sweeting's for any kind of sandwich you wish. They have exalted sandwich-making into an art, and their variety of kinds is quite wonderful. A cold sally-lunn, cut in thin slices and buttered, is a pleasant change from bread-and-butter. The chocolate, orange, and coffee cakes you ask about are simply good sponge cakes variously flavoured and iced, with soft transparent icing to correspond. Your cook should be able to make them quite easily. Salted almonds are rather a popular addition to afternoon tea, but as you only want to vary the programme of your daily "five o'clock," let me advise you never to have more than two kinds of refreshment, one sweet and one savoury. It is at once simpler and better form. In hot weather, however, lemon squashes, lemonade, iced coffee, or milk and seltzer, may be served as well as tea, and will be gratefully accepted in its stead by many guests who have just arrived from the broiling and dusty street.

CRICKET MATCH.—*Cup for Luncheon*.—You very epicurean and exacting correspondent! who are weary of champagne and claret and cider cups, and seem inclined to echo Mr. Stiggins' remark as to the vanity of all "taps," how do you expect me to gratify your desire for a less familiar beverage wherewith to regale yourself and your guests at your lunches at Lord's during the Eton and Harrow? It does so happen I can supply your need with a most unsurpassable cool tankard, of the name of which, however, I am ignorant. It matters not, however, the concoction itself is so excellent. Peel the rind of a lemon as thin as paper, and throw it into a loving cup or tankard, with two lumps of sugar and a little (about half a tea-cupful) of

boiling water; cover over that the lemon-peel may steep, and in about ten minutes add a glass of sherry and a large lump of ice. Pour on to this a bottle of claret and another of champagne, and take out the lemon-peel, adding in its stead a good spray of borage, a small sprig of mint, a shaving of cucumber rind. Stir well, and when thoroughly cold it is ready to drink.

COUNTRY MATRON.—*Drinks for Garden Parties.*—You might vary the beverages served at your frequent tennis parties by having claret cup one time, cider cup the next, and ringing the changes with shandygaff, Badminton, and Hatfield, &c., besides lemonade, milk and soda, lemon squashes and milk-lemonade, iced tea, coffee, and cocoa for the teetotal contingent of your guests. Here is an admirable recipe for *Cider Cup*: One quart champagne cider, one liqueur cognac, one ditto sherry, half ditto Maraschino, one dessertspoonful crushed sugar-candy, peel of half a lemon, and the other half cut in slices, one sprig borage, and ditto of balm; mix, and stand in rough ice and salt for two hours. I have tried variations on this formula with oranges, verbenas, Benedictine in lieu of Maraschino, &c., but have come to the conclusion that the college dons who evolved this recipe were wise in their generation, and that it is impossible to improve on their invention. Shandygaff is much favoured by many men, though others find it too heavy to play tennis on. It should be made of equal quantities of Bass and ginger beer, or rather with an imperial pint bottle of ale to a stone bottle of the milder fluid, and must be well iced. *Hatfield* is a refined name for an unrefined but excellent mixture, concocted with a bottle of iced ginger beer and liqueur glass of good unsweetened gin, and very popular with men-folk. Iced tea can only be really tasted in perfection when made with one kind of tea rarely met

with in England, *i. e.* Curio Oolong, which possesses a peculiar and delicious flavour; but if that is not procurable, a mixture of black and green tea, producing a clear, not too dark, liquor, should be used. It should be well sweetened, and flavoured with lemon-juice, but no milk must be used. Place it in a pewter can surrounded by rough ice and salt for two hours, and serve in tumblers, with a slice of lemon in each. Many players will prefer this drink to anything you can offer them. Iced coffee you do not need a recipe for. *Iced Cocoa* is delicious made with cocoatina and milk, frozen in the same way as the iced tea, and served in cups, with a large spoonful of whipped cream placed on the top of each. It is a good plan to have a separate table, with soda and seltzer syphons, lemons, glass lemon squeezers, powdered sugar, jugs of milk, tumblers, spoons, &c., where people may concoct cooling drinks to their own taste.

YOUNG HOUSEKEEPER.—*Pretty Garnishes.*—You are rather indefinite in your inquiry. Do you require garnishes to enhance the appearance of fish, flesh, or fowl, soup, salad, or savoury? I must warn you I am the bitter enemy of the present school of decorative cooking and *charcuterie*, and hate artificial colourings, gold leaf in jellies, &c., nor am I too great a friend to the indiscriminate use of bag and forcing-pipe. Dishes can be made to look quite as pretty and appetizing with only legitimate adornment, and it is better style. A great *chef* never condescends to such meretricious tricking-out of his dishes; he lets their appearance proclaim their nature. There are plenty of dainty garnishings, however, which taste as good as they look. Hard-boiled eggs, the yolks rubbed through a sieve, and the whites chopped very finely, chopped pistachios, scarlet barberries, chillies, lobster coral, West Indian pickles,

picked leaves of chervil, finely-chopped truffles—these and many more should surely give you sufficient variety for aspics, mayonnaises, chaudfroids, canapees, &c. For sweets, jellies, and creams there are no prettier garnishings than preserved fruits, red-currant jelly, almonds, pistachios, &c. For fried entrées, I can tell you of a most original and fascinating garnish, invented by a man cook of my acquaintance, that is, fried gelatine. The kind which is cut in shreds must be used, *not* the sheet, and it must be fried in a wire basket set in a saucepan of boiling lard, when it will swell and burst and frizzle into a crisp, gold-coloured froth. For plain French salads you may garnish with nasturtium or borage blossoms. They look extremely pretty, and are good to eat. For clear soup, when you are in a hurry and have no time to prepare savoury custard, *raviolis*, or tiny duchesse loaves, put in some picked leaves of chervil. This is very nice when the soup itself is flavoured with the herb.

THE END.



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